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Labor Age



THE FARMER-LABOR MENACE
*Will there be a Third Party
headed by La Follette?*

Labor Age

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The Farmer-Labor Menace

WHEN President McKinley set about to seize the Philippines—to bring to them the blessings of Civilization and American Capital—he knelt down and asked God what he should do. Strangely enough, he was reassured that the plan, framed up many months before, was desired by Heaven also. So, at least, he told an assembly of Methodist Bishops—according to an interesting and amusing book recently issued by Boni and Liveright, entitled "Strenuous Americans."

British capital, having no such means of aid at the present time, is reported to be in a dreadful stew. It is thinking of taking wings and flying across the Atlantic, where already there rests 50 per cent of the gold supply of the world. Its fear is of the Labor Party, with its capital levy and nationalization proposals. But Ramsay MacDonald has warned It that that will not bring It much aid and comfort. It is only the "panic-mongers," and not facts, that will persuade It to flight, he says in the December issue of his magazine. Furthermore, if It comes to our sheltering shores, It will find here another Menace—the rising Farmer-Labor Movement.

This Menace has not yet the proportions of the British effort. It has not developed the horns or cloven hoofs of the Monster across the waters. But it is a young and virile thing, with endless possibilities. Up to the present it has shown a reckless disregard for parties or party slogans. In one state it backs a Democrat against the Copper Trust and wins. In another it supports a Republican against the big grain interests, and likewise wins. In a third it rigs up a party all its own—the Farmer-Labor party—with a like

result. In the offices of the Senate and House at Washington, under a medley of names and party designations, its representatives plan and plot to the discomfort of Henry Cabot Lodge, Nicholas Longworth, Calvin Coolidge and their reactionary backers.

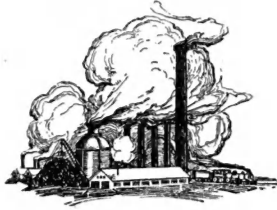
Now, what will come of all this? Does it mean the beginning of a third party? There is much talk of that around the fringes of the Movement, but as yet little action. The most concrete thing that has been done is the planning of a Farmer-Labor convention of national proportions in one of the Twin Cities in May. It is preceded in point of time by the meeting of the Conference of Progressive Political Action in St. Louis in February and the Unity Conference of Eastern Progressives in Washington in January.

The Movement has gained its greatest strength from the united action of the American Federation of Labor, the rail unions through the C. P. P. A., and the Northwest farmers, spurred on by the educational work of the now-weakened Non-partisan League. None of these organizations stand for a third party. They even deprecate any talk of such. Their viewpoint is well expressed by Senator Wheeler, the able "gentleman from Montana," in his article in this issue. The "balance of power" theory has worked well thus far, and should not arbitrarily be abandoned. The A. F. of L. has repeatedly stated that the result of the last elections vindicated its program of "rewarding friends and punishing enemies."

But all of these forces found it necessary to get behind a third party in Minnesota—when the old parties could not be captured. They united in putting across Senators Henrik Shipstead and Mag-

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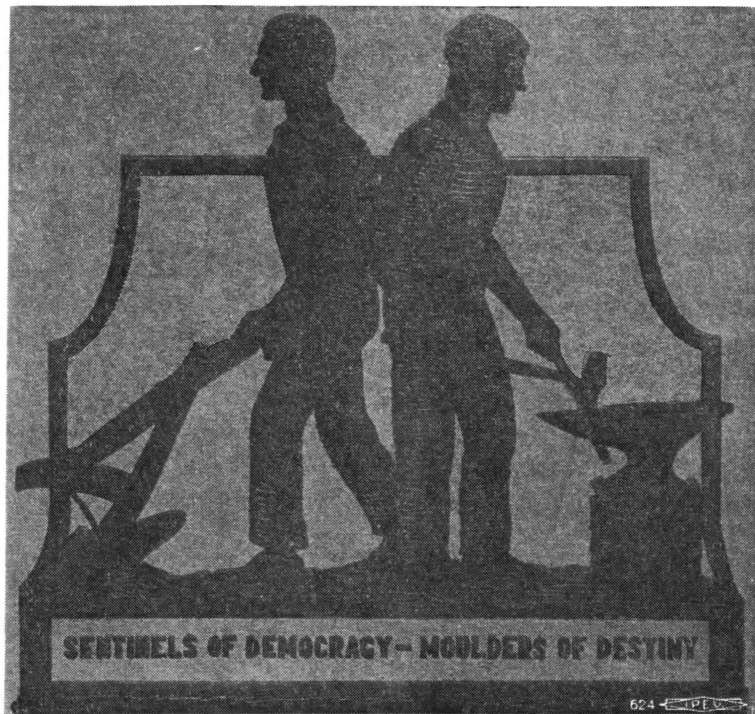
Labor Age



The Hope of The Northwest

By WILLIAM MAHONEY

THE
ALLIANCE
WHICH
THREATENS
PRIVILEGE



As Pictured
by the
Farmer-Labor
Party of
Minnesota

THE Great Northwest is being rediscovered. On the trail of Radisson and Marquette and Lewis and Clarke have gone the political prophets of America. They are studying the peculiar animal which has arisen in those parts—the Farmer-Labor Movement. They are conjecturing what it will do in the coming presidential campaign. They are watching it shake up the House and block the reactionary program of the Senate. They are trying to find an answer to the question: "Why has it come to pass, and is it here to stay?"

This Farmer-Labor Movement—which has attracted such national attention by its measure of substantial success—is now undertaking a new task. It is a bigger one than the last, a much more difficult one. It is attempting to bring together the progressive forces of all the states into a great national coalition for the campaign of 1924.

Minnesota, where the greatest degree of progress has been made, has been charged with the responsibility of this important effort. It is a responsibility which has not been sought by the

men of the Gopher State, and it is reluctantly assumed. Only those who have borne the burden of carrying forward the new movement can fully appreciate the meaning of this new obligation.

Despite what some of the political discoverers may say, the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party is not an accident. Nor is it the result altogether of adverse economic conditions among the farming class. It represents many years of patient and intelligent work, of education and organization. The men who have launched and have fostered the party are not heedless enthusiasts who are carried away with the great success achieved. They know too well that there is a long road to travel before the victory is a permanent one.

Where Minnesota Stands

Minnesota has heretofore taken no part in the various attempts to form a national party. Representatives of the state movement have attended the national conventions of the various shades of progressives. After learning the conditions in other states they have taken the position that every atom of their energy should be devoted to the advancement of the state movement. The development of thought along political lines in other states did not seem to favor the birth of a new national party. Minnesota's attitude has been the cause for criticism from many who did not understand the reason for our non-participation.

Our insular attitude was due to a careful study of the forces necessary to develop a virile political movement, state and national. Conditions in Minnesota offered the best field to try out our ideas. Until these were shown to produce results, the leaders were unwilling to risk wasting their energy over a wide and uncertain field.

We are the last ones to attempt to give out the impression that we have solved all political problems and that we can now give to the rest of the world the secret of how to win a triumph. We are still working to strengthen and expand our own movement. The best we can say is that we have discovered that when energy, tact and intelligence are applied, with proper economic conditions, fruitful results will be secured. Along this line we are continuing to work.

The Minnesota movement of the Farmer-Labor forces towards victory has been along the road of changing tactics and methods of campaigning. We have had to experiment and compromise to convince the stubborn and the doubtful. By forbearance and tolerance we have won a great number

of devoted adherents to the party of progress.

Preceded by many years of radical economic propaganda, Minnesota had, at the time when the Farmer-Labor Movement was started, a large sprinkling of persons who had a good background for a practical progressive political movement. The big task was to enlist a large number of voters who were willing to join in an undertaking that promised a new deal in politics.

Just how to unify all voters of a progressive turn of mind was the big problem. At the time it was felt that an independent party was not practical. Many of the voters still clung to the hope that it was possible to secure real results through the machinery of the then dominant parties.

Thus the Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota had its germ in the nonpartisan principle. The so-called Farmers Nonpartisan League, and the Working Peoples Nonpartisan League representing the organized workers, made repeated joint efforts to capture the Republican party through the primary.

"Capturing" the Old Parties

The basis of the policy of the Farmers League was to secure control of the dominant party, and use its machinery to pass certain progressive measures. In Minnesota this effort could not hope for success without the support of the organized workers.

In the first joint campaign of the farmers and the workers in 1918 (after the Farmers Nonpartisan League had been defeated in the Republican primaries) was on a new party ticket named the "Farmer-Labor" party. This name was given the new party because of its economic meaning and it was felt that the new party should reflect in the most pronounced way the real basis of the movement.

In the three-cornered contest for the governorship, the new Farmer-Labor party won second place in the state and gained official standing. That was the first time that Organized Labor—through the action of the state Federation of Labor—had taken official action in a regular campaign along partisan lines. The following year the Organized Labor forces of the state created the Working Peoples Nonpartisan Political League.

While the farmers and industrial workers had, by the campaign of 1918 established a political party of their own, some of the Farmer League leaders deemed it advisable to try again to cap-

ture the Republican Party in the primaries. Candidates were endorsed and filed in state primaries of 1920, and in due time defeated. Then it was decided to run a part of the ticket endorsed and defeated in the primaries on an independent ticket. Their names were placed on the ballot by petition. Again they were defeated, although a huge vote was piled up for them.

The "Dummies" Surprise

However, the Farmer-Labor party which had been established in 1918 was not neglected. It was the conviction of many of us that eventually we would get the entire movement operating through the new party. Arrangements were accordingly made to place certain candidates on that party ballot. This would prevent the enemy from doing so and the official position gained would not be allowed to lapse from want of use.

No campaign was made for these "dummy" candidates, yet they got over 200,000 votes! This convinced the doubtful but sincere members of the movement that the time had come for the progressives of the state to function politically through their own party. But some of the Nonpartisan leaders were very much opposed to this course. They even wanted to drop back to the methods of the A. F. of L. "Take no part in the primaries," was their advice, "but just wait until nominations are made and then endorse the 'best' of the 'worst.'" Among those who took what they termed the "balance of power plan" was no less a man than A. C. Townley, the distinguished leader of the Nonpartisan League.

But when the joint conventions of the farmers and the workers met in the spring of 1922 the question was fought out. The advocates of a straight-out Farmer-Labor Party won overwhelmingly. Candidates were endorsed and filed on the Farmer-Labor party primary, and won without a contest.

Then began the battle to elect them. In prior campaigns the work had been done by the economic organizations interested. Now the matter of conforming to the legal requirements of a regular political party had to be met. This resulted in a three-cornered movement. The Farmers League officials and some of the Working Peoples League officials refused to yield to the regular party organization, which has but limited power in the state campaign, and little facilities for doing the necessary work.

As the new party requires continuous educational and organization work, it was necessary to build a rank-and-file organization of enrolled members to do this necessary work.

Since the movement in Minnesota had become partisan, the basic principle of the farmers and the workers' organizations had become obsolete.

There was, consequently, a steady decline in the strength of these organizations without any corresponding increase of strength in the official party structure. This made it necessary to reorganize the party organization on a new basis, and so constitute it that it could function in every line of vital growth and activity.

Victory—and Then, Victory

The campaign of 1922 resulted in a great vote, in spite of the friction and duplication of many organizations. Henrik Shipstead was the only state-wide Farmer-Labor candidate elected. On account of the interest in the fight for U. S. Senator, he got many votes that the rest of the ticket did not receive. The party vote was around 300,000. Many believe that Magnus Johnson, candidate for governor, was elected but was counted out.

In the special senatorial election of 1923 the party won out overwhelmingly. This was not a true Farmer-Labor vote. Many were dissatisfied with the Republican candidate and had to turn to the Farmer-Laborite.

After nearly a year of agitation a state conference of the elements constituting the Farmer-Labor party was held on the 8th of September, 1923. Plans were laid which will unite all the economic and progressive elements into a state federation. This will carry forward the education and organization work and safeguard the movement.

It may be seen that the party in Minnesota has steadily moved forward and built on each success. A great mass of voters have been well organized and firmly disciplined in the work of conducting a party of the producing class. The Minnesota movement is now pretty well on the road to success, and will enter the campaign of 1924 prepared to carry forward the banner of the new movement to complete victory.

The movement has been built on the principle that legislation is the thing sought, and the election of candidates is incidental in the struggle. While it is important to have candidates that will be loyal to the cause, the campaigns have not been

built around some "great man." For that reason the cause has prospered and survived defeat after defeat. It is a People's Movement—based on issues, not men.

Uniting the Progressives

Having reached the present stage of development, the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party is now prepared to join in an attempt to bring the progressives of the nation together. It is our hope that it is possible to have a united step forward in the national campaign of 1924.

An informal conference was held in St. Paul on Nov. 15th, 1923, of representatives of the Farmer-Labor-progressive elements of the Northwest and of many national progressive organizations. After a two day's discussion the delegates assembled, passed a resolution asking the Minnesota movement to call a national convention of Farmer-Labor-Progressives in the Twin cities of Minneapolis-St. Paul on May 30th next, and named a local committee to promote the proposition. The members of the committee are: Wm. Mahoney, state chairman of the Working Peoples Political League, and member of the state committee of the Farmer-Labor Party; Henry Teigan, former secretary of the National Nonpartisan League, and private secretary of Magnus Johnson, and Dr. Wm. A. Schaper, former professor in Minnesota University.

The conference adopted a short platform consisting of four planks: 1st, Government ownership of railroads; 2nd, Public ownership of Natural resources; 3rd, Control by the people of money and credits through government and co-operative banks; 4th, Abolition of judicial abuses. The call was to be issued to all progressive organizations which would subscribe to these fundamental planks.

Endorsement of this call has come from numerous state and national bodies, and there seems to be a unanimous agreement that Minnesota should issue the call. The matter is now being taken up by numerous bodies in that state, and in nearly every case the idea of a national convention in May has been endorsed.

The question will be finally settled at the state convention of the party elements which will meet in February. If the convention approves the plan, it will be pushed forward with vigor. In the meantime, all preparations are being made to issue the call. The local committee of arrangements are working out the details of representation. It is

planned to have about a thousand votes in the convention, apportioned among the various states according to the electoral vote and the progressive vote cast in 1922. If the program goes through there will doubtless be several thousand delegates. But that will enable those from each state to perfect their state organizations so the campaigns in each state can go forward immediately.

No New Party At First

The plan is not to organize a new party. It is to unify all progressives in a great campaign for joint candidates for President and Vice-president. If, after the close of the contest, conditions are favorable, it may be possible to form a united Farmer-Labor-Progressive party. If this program can be put across, it will mean that all the Northwest states can be carried for the New Party.

Some little difficulty will be encountered from those in the movement who still like to flirt with the old parties. Here in Minnesota a few of the oldtime Democrats oppose a national party as it clashes with their allegiance. But these do not belong with us and will have to be laid aside. The movement calls for fundamental changes, and there is nothing in common between the purposes of the new movement and other dominant parties.

The general sentiment is unanimously for Robert LaFollette for President. It is felt that he will accept the nomination if it is clear that there is unity and harmony. The representatives from all the Northwest border states, which have Farmer-Labor movements developed about the same as Minnesota, were and are solid for LaFollette.

Some advance the argument that the convention should be held after the old party conventions. This proposition was rejected with vigor by the conferees as implying that there were no principles at stake and it was just a case of getting a sop. It is now argued by the opportunists in the movement that we should wait and see if a progressive is selected by the Democrats or the Republicans. If so, they declare, no other nominations should be made.

The same argument was encountered in the development of our state movement. It was disregarded, and it is now felt that it should be ignored in the national situation. It is pretty well assured, however, that neither of the old capitalist parties will nominate a progressive. There will be just that much time saved in the campaign, if the convention is held in May.

The "Balance of Power" Victory

By BURTON K. WHEELER

SENATOR WHEELER is the Progressive who, as a Democrat, carried Montana against the Copper Trust, by almost 20,000 votes in 1922. In sending us this article, he writes: "In the following discussion of the Farmer-Labor Movement in the United States let it be understood that I do not refer to any organization under the name of Farmer-Labor or other variations of that name. I am not discussing parties or party organizations that have been formed or attempted by various groups from time to time. But I refer only to the movement among farmers and industrial workers to unite and employ their political power to secure needed economic legislation."

THE Farmer-Labor movement, which appeared on the political horizon a few years ago in the shape of a nonpartisan cloud not much larger than a fleece, has been spreading over the western sky until the weather men of both old parties have considered it necessary to send out warning signals to the faithful, forecasting a possible tornado in 1924.

Although it started in the west, this movement to unite the producers in a common cause is no longer confined to that section, but has become national in purpose and scope of operation. The Farmer-Labor movement, unlike most political gestures, is purely economic in its purpose and nonpartisan in its operations. It harbors no appeal to prejudice, religious, racial or political but its demand for support is on a coldly demonstrated economic program.

Our modern social structure, as indeed all social structures, is subject to two forces—I might call them laws of evolution: the law of competition and the law of co-operation. The law of competition is the law of the jungle—the law of man in a primitive state—the law of the survival of the fittest—the law that fosters contention, and hatred and war. The law of co-operation is the law of civilized society or of a society where men live in amity and mutual helpfulness. The law that the Man of Gallilee preached two thousand years ago—the law of Justice, the law of love.

Our Shame

It is to our shame that as members of what we are pleased to term civilized society we have built our state and have maintained its supremacy by and through the law of competition. As a result we have developed an exploiting class that rules the nation—and the world. We have developed a class of millionaires and a class of paupers. We are told that all this is in accord with the law of nature—the law of the survival of the fittest. The

world-war was the ripened fruit—the legitimate product of the law of competition on a world scale. We want no more of it.

The Farmer-Labor movement proposes to substitute for the law of competition the law of co-operation. In short, it proposes to substitute peace for war in every function of life.

The practical part of the Farmer-Labor movement is based on the newly discovered fact that the economic interest of the farm workers and the industrial workers are identical. I say **newly discovered** fact, for until within the last few years the farmers and industrial workers were taught by their exploiters—the bankers and employers—that they had nothing in common—that the wage earner was the natural economic enemy of the producer of food—and they believed it. They know better now. They have at last located their common economic enemy. They have discovered that their only hope and in fact the only hope of civilized society lies in the direction of universal co-operation among the producers, to meet and withstand the political forces of the exploiters. They have further discovered that they have not been receiving a just proportion of the results of their labor. To obtain this they propose to co-operate—that is all.

Another Bunker Hill

The present Farmer-Labor movement started about ten years ago when the farmers of North Dakota rose in mutiny against the rule of the old guard and organized the Nonpartisan League and captured the state government. This was worse than treason—it was rebellion, and dearly the farmers of North Dakota paid for their temerity. The combined forces of greed, led by the Milling trust and the financial interests from Wall Street to San Francisco, determined not only to crush the farmer state government but ruin the state.

The story of that fight in which the embattled farmers of North Dakota withstood the attacks of the combined interests will go down in history with that other battle at Bunker Hill. The results of this five-year fight against unmeasured odds are, nine United States senators and a score of governors and an organized movement that is likely to change the political complexion of the nation for years to come.

Labor, especially union labor, has been shy of political action. For some reason, this giant has persistently refused (until recently) to use his political strength to secure his rights. Not until the organized farmers of North Dakota secured full control of the legislature and gave organized labor the legislation for which it had been asking for years, did labor awake to the possibilities of political action. Here was a demonstration that could not be ignored. The farmers and the workers could get together and get results. But in order to get together they must eliminate their political prejudices and become nonpartisan in action—otherwise their forces would be divided as they always had been.

The "Balance of Power"

As a result of this condition the Farmer-Labor movement has for its foundation and owes its success, so far, to the "balance of power" principle. A majority is often defeated by a split in its forces. A minority may win by holding the balance of power. The Farmer-Labor movement won in the 1922 elections by the use of the balance of power in a flank movement.

The two militant forces in the campaign of 1922 were the Farmers Nonpartisan League and the Conference for Progressive Political Action—a long name but a most efficient and effective organization of the farmer and labor forces.

The C. P. P. A., as it is now known, was and is made up of the railway brotherhoods, the United Mine Workers, various farmer organizations and in many states the State Federation of Labor. This organization was nonpartisan in the fullest sense of the word. It worked in close association with the Farmers Nonpartisan League. In one state it supported the republican candidate for the senate, in another state it supported the democratic nominee. It supported Brookhart in Iowa and La Follette in Wisconsin, while at the same time it marshalled its forces for Ralston of Indiana, Wheeler of Montana and Dill of Washing-

ton. In Nebraska it drove a double team by supporting Howell, the republican candidate for United States senator, and Charles Bryan, democratic candidate for governor—and elected both of them.

Results of the Last Fight

In Minnesota the C. P. P. A. threw its forces into the camp of the Farmer-Labor party of Minnesota and elected Shipstead by about eighty thousand majority over Kellogg, the administration candidate. The same forces elected Magnus Johnson in the special election to fill the place made vacant by the death of Knute Nelson—a staunch member of the old guard.

The net results of the Farmer-Labor movement as shown by the returns of the 1922 elections may be summed up about as follows: United States senators—Harris of Michigan, La Follette of Wisconsin, Ralston of Indiana, Shipstead of Minnesota, Frazier of North Dakota, Wheeler of Montana, Dill of Washington, Howell of Nebraska, Kendrick of Wyoming, and Brookhart of Iowa. To this we may add a few governors, such as Sweet of Colorado, and Davis of Kansas—not to mention a dozen or two congressmen.

In my opinion the future success of the Farmer-Labor movement lies in the line of nonpartisan action and the use of the balance of power within the dominant parties. Should the organization of a national party be attempted now, the reactionary forces would combine, as they always have. Through their control of the finances and the press of the country, they would defeat a third or minority party, pledged to any kind of economic reform.

The Farmer-Labor forces, by following the tactics they so successfully employed in the elections of 1922, can determine to a large extent the results of the elections in 1924.

The nonpartisan sentiment that has been fostered by the farmers of the Northwest has taken deep root in the minds of the people everywhere. In fact, the fight for nonpartisan legislation has been transferred from the political field to the halls of Congress. Party bonds no longer hold when a principle is involved. Many of our legislators are standing on their own feet and refuse to betray their constituents at the call of party expediency. In this there is hope for a better political day.

Back of the Farmer-Labor Movement

The Story of North Dakota and What Followed

By MAGNUS JOHNSON

“**A** MERE freak turn of events!” said many Reactionaries, when Minnesota first went Farmer-Labor. They said this, trying to reassure themselves that the farmers and the workers of the Northwest were not in earnest in their demands for Progressive action toward relief of these two classes of the common people.

But things that have occurred since have shown the sincerity and earnestness of both farmers and laborers. Minnesota has remained Farmer-Labor by a bigger vote than before. Around it are other states, whose citizens have declared themselves unmistakably for the Farmer-Labor cause by the election of men standing for that program.

Back of this movement, which is now making itself felt throughout the nation, is a long record of struggle and education. The farmers have not realized over-night that they have not been treated fairly. They have fought against economic and political conditions which have injured them for some time. It was after all other efforts had failed that they turned to a big, concentrated movement for relief—and joined hands finally with the city workers for justice for them both.

The common ground on which these two producers' groups joined was in opposition to the Big Interests attacking them—the grain, steel, railroad and banking groups in particular. North Dakota, of course, was the starting point of the struggle. Almost 90 per cent of the people of that state is rural, living either in the country or in small villages. It is one of the great wheat-producing states—turning out more of that grain than of all the other grains combined. The price of wheat is, therefore, of much concern to the North Dakota farmer. But in reality he has had no control at all of the marketing of this important product. The Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce has dictated terms and prices. These have been determined by the speculations carried on in that chamber.

Neither had the farmer anything to say about the grading of his wheat. The chamber attended to that item for him also. The grain was “docked” for containing a few wild oats or mustard seed—

both of which have commercial value. It has been estimated that in an average crop year over \$20,000,000 were taken away from the North Dakota tiller of the soil in loss of by-products alone. “Add to this the loss of grading,” as the North Dakota farmers said in one of their statements, “the commission charges, freight and elevator charges, to say nothing of the price fixed by the Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce, and you can readily see why the farmer is as deeply interested in the marketing of his wheat as he is in making two blades grow where one grew before.”

The 10-Year Fight

First, the farmers decided that their own co-operative elevators would help. They were not wrong here—for they did help some. But they did not touch the Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce, with its strangle-hold on the output for their goods. A terminal elevator was needed. A long and bitter fight set in with the Chamber, the farmers building up their Equity co-operative terminal elevator. But the Chamber was strong, and the wheat-growers saw that they could not win a place in the world market without a state-owned elevator. Then followed the 10-year fight, which finally put the dirt farmers, through Lynn Frazier as Governor, almost in complete control of the state—and brought about the state elevator victory.

As the fight widened, however, and something was gained, step by step, the farmers saw that they would have to carry their campaign into the national arena. That seemed the only way to make their improvement of conditions permanent. The North Dakota idea spread to other Western states—as far south as Oklahoma. The Minnesota farmers took it up, and made several attempts, without success, to secure control of one of the old parties. Action was needed in the United States Government—to curb and reform the Federal Reserve System, to stabilize the price of wheat, to halt the harmful program of the railroads—before the farmers could be assured of any relief. That became the new objective of the movement—to

place Representatives and Senators in the United States Congress, to see that these things were done.

Frazier and Ladd

North Dakota had already sent John M. Baer, the cartoonist, and J. H. Sinclair to the House of Representatives. There they fought for recognition for the farmers, and for their rights in such matters as grain grades, freight rates, and the closing of the chambers of commerce. They also came into close contact with the American Federation of Labor, and were active in advancing the interests of the organized workers. Their state now sent Governor Lynn Frazier and Dr. Ladd to the United States Senate.

During Frazier's term as Governor the farmers had come to know what it means to have a representative from their own ranks in official position. Despite the great handicaps which the opposition of the financial interests placed in its way, the farmers' government was able to accomplish a rather remarkable record in that state. Not only did it enact a great deal of legislation which protected the interests of the farmers, but it also passed legislation endorsed by Organized Labor. The taxes of the state were put on a new basis, so that the farmers and workers would bear a lighter burden and the railroads and big business interests would contribute the share which they had escaped giving in the past.

Dr. Ladd was president of the Agricultural College. He was appointed to that position at the time that the grain interests had succeeded in ousting Dr. John Worst, because of his sympathy with the farmers. Dr. Ladd, however, proved to be as good a friend of the farmers as his predecessor had been. The inevitable effort was made to shelve him also; but the coming of the organized farmers into the fight put an end to that effort. Instead, Dr. Ladd was elevated by the farmers to a place in the Senate. They joined Senator Robert M. LaFollette, whose career has been so helpful to the producers of the country—and whose friends in the Senate have now increased so much in number.

Banks and Railroads

This brief outline gives the background of the Farmer-Labor effort. It shows that the Movement is not a mushroom growth. It also gives some indication of what the people of the Northwest want of the National Government. They

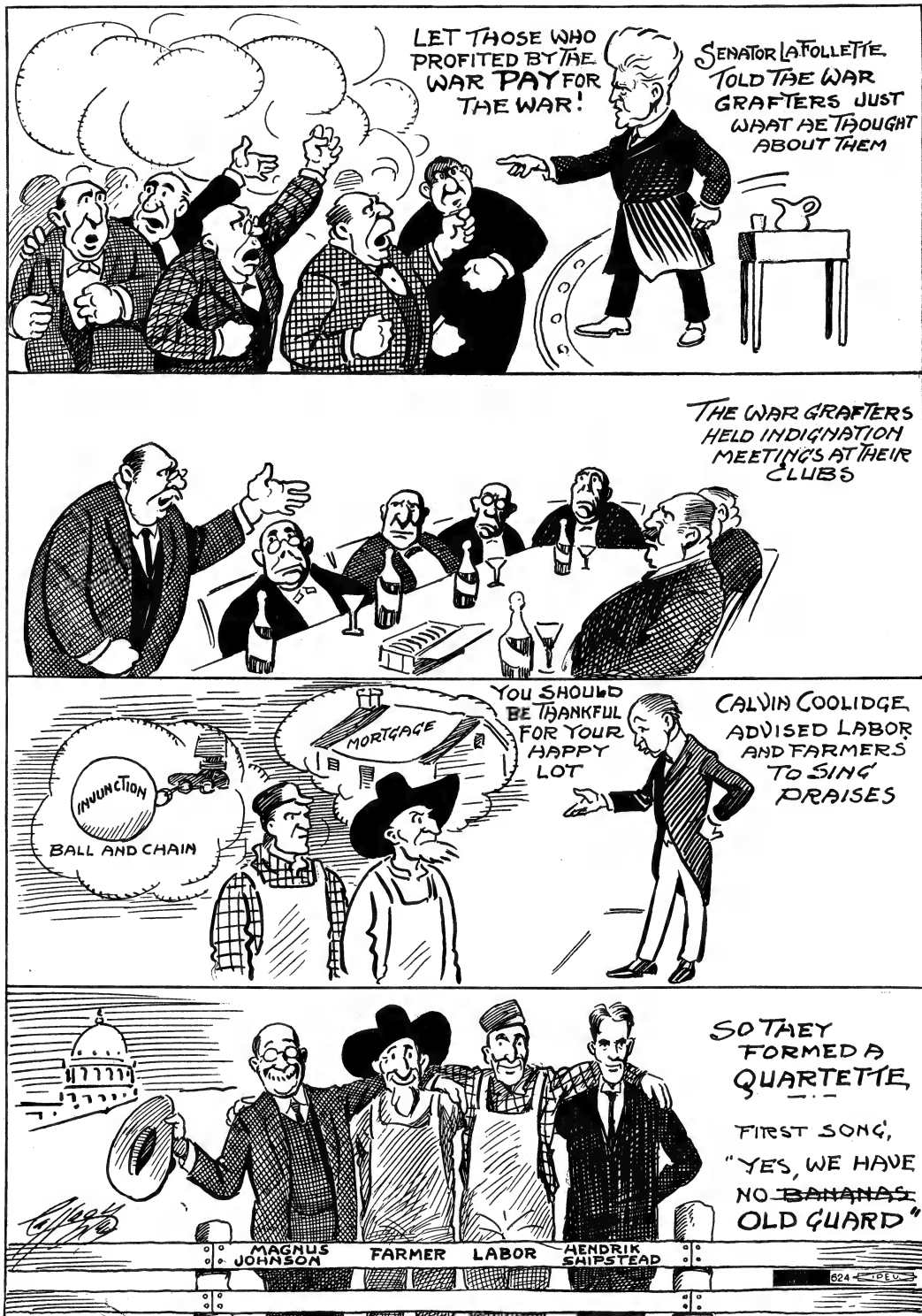
want the Federal Reserve System modified, and I am going to fight to see that this is done. The big bankers have used this system to increase their own profits at the expense of the farmers and workers.

The Federal Reserve System was used to bring about "deflation"—to drive prices back to old levels. The result was mortgage and ruin for the farmer, and unemployment for the worker. The whole system should be amended to become a real government agency, particularly aiming to protect the common people.

Another common meeting ground of the farmers and workers is the railroad question. Farm products are entirely too low in price at their source; they are too high at their place of sale. The same policy of the railroads which has made the workers' wages tumble, has been responsible for this condition. The producer in each case is being compelled to pay for the "water" in the railroads, and for such devices as the Esch-Cummins Act, which have been hit upon to protect that "water" and make it yield dividends. The first step in the program must be the repeal of that Act. After that, Government Ownership is a logical next measure. The railroads constantly state that control is costing them over a billion dollars a year. Their financing is half a billion higher than it would cost the government. So there is at least one billion and a half dollars saved through direct Government Ownership. Banker Management has brought the roads to as critical and inefficient a condition, almost, as could be imagined.

Old Parties Bankrupt

Banker Management, in all lines of industry, has been given a longer lease of life by reason of the more or less camouflaged fight staged at each election between the two old parties. In Minnesota, at least, the Farmer-Labor forces have given up any hope of doing anything with these old parties. We need not worry about them at all—for we have a party of our own. It was formed after the old parties had shown themselves to be completely bankrupt, so far as service to the common people is concerned. We will keep this new party going—just as the Abolitionist struggle brought forth its own party—until not only the big issues mentioned, but all others affecting the producers, have been met and solved. That will mean the bringing in of a new independence to the workers and farmers of America.



Drawn by M. J. Callaghan for LABOR AGE.

A TALE OF TWO SPEECHES (IN THE TWIN CITIES)

The Elk Hills Steal

By PHI LIP SOBER

THE Senate Committee investigating the oil grant of Teapot Dome to Harry F. Sinclair, is in session. One wonders, sitting among the newspaper correspondents, if this is really December, 1923. The shade of the Ballinger scandal during Taft's administration hovers over the room.

"Are the workers and the farmers thus constantly to be tricked?" you find yourself saying. After all the raids upon the natural resources of the country in times past, after all the exposes, we are back again at the old story. The Harding-Coolidge administration is stealing oil from the people just as the old steals were put over in the past.

The Senate Committee is trying hard to get at the whole story of the Teapot Dome deal. They are prying and prodding the witnesses. At least, some of them are. The standpat members—including Lenroot—are doing all they can to "cover up" for the former Secretary of the Interior, Mr. Fall, and the men whom he treated so nicely. When lo! a bomb is thrown into the gathering. Unexpectedly, it is disclosed that Teapot Dome was only a small "gift" compared to a secret deal made with the Doheny interests for the naval oil reserve at Elk Hills, California. This latest oil scandal—of which we hear comparatively nothing in the papers—is of far greater magnitude and more sinister meaning than the Teapot Dome affair.

Yes, Lincoln Steffens was right. "Go back to the cities I exposed 20 years ago," he has said, "and you will find them just as corrupt as ever." So with the National Government. The farmers and the workers are still being gouged—and Republicans and Democrats join indiscriminately in the gouging.

Does that sound too harsh or far-fetched? Well, listen to the rest of the disclosure.

Meaning of the Secret Deal

Like Teapot Dome, Elk Hills was a reserve set aside for the future emergency use of the United States Navy in time of war. Like Teapot Dome, it was leased to one of Secretary Fall's personal friends. And like Teapot Dome, the excuse given was that it was menaced by outside drainage. But whereas Teapot Dome is estimated to contain

something over 25,000,000 barrels of oil, Elk Hills is estimated to hold 250,000,000 barrels of oil. And whereas the profit that Sinclair will make from the first grant has been variously estimated at from \$5,000,000 to \$10,000,000, Doheny himself testified that "with any luck" he would make a profit of at least \$100,000,000 by exploiting it.

It develops that Doheny, in 1920—the year he was a delegate to the Democratic national convention and a candidate for the Democratic nomination for the vice-presidency—contributed \$25,000 to the Republican campaign fund, in addition to the \$75,000 which he gave to the Democratic campaign fund. This startling, but logical, attitude toward the great political parties by the interests that exploit the country's natural resources, may throw some light on the growing conviction that there is no essential difference between those parties. It may suggest that the only real hope of the people lies in a third party.

The story of Elk Hills is almost incredible. Early in 1920, soon after the Harding administration took office, local agents of the Department of the Interior reported from California that the Standard Oil Co. had laid claim to an entire section almost precisely in the center of the reserve. The company, they reported, was conducting drilling operations. Similar reports were made by local attorneys of the Department of Justice.

In a short time the Standard brought in a series of phenomenally rich wells on this section. Testimony at the hearing was that one such gusher was producing 20,000 barrels of oil a day at the end of a few weeks. Adjacent wells were almost as productive. The local attorney of the Department of Justice informed his department heads in Washington that Standard's claim to the section rested on the flimsiest grounds, and urged that an injunction be sought to stop the operation.

The "Zealous" Mr. Daugherty

Former Assistant Attorney-General Garnett testified that he called the matter to the attention of Attorney-General Daugherty, and that the latter sent him a note, by an officer of the Standard Oil Co. of California, to take no action until he was instructed to do so!

The Land Commissioner's office, however, had filed proceedings contesting Standard's right to the section. The customary procedure in such cases is for the local agent of the Land Office to hold hearings, and forward a report to the Commissioner for a decision. The law provides that the losing contestant can take an appeal from this decision to the Secretary of the Interior.

In this case, however, Oscar Sutro, attorney for Standard Oil, came to Washington, and prevailed upon Secretary Fall to conduct the hearing in person. Fall listened to an oral argument by Sutro, did not ask the attorneys for the Navy Department and the Department of Justice to present any argument for the Government, although they were there for that purpose, and immediately handed down a decision validating and affirming Standard's right to the section. This, it was explained, made it impossible for the Government to appeal to the courts in an endeavor to oust Standard.

Subsequently, reports were received that the reserve was being drained by commercial wells. Thereupon, Secretary Fall advertised for bids for drilling of defensive wells to offset the drainage. This is a common practice, and consists of sinking a line of wells along the boundary of the area to be defended, opposite the wells which are exercising the drainage. The area menaced in this case was but a tiny part of the reserve, and the number of offset wells would be comparatively small. In this open competitive bidding, Doheny's Pan-American company got the contract.

Giving Away 37,000 Acres

Later, however, the contract was secretly modified in such a manner that Doheny was given a preferential right to the whole reserve, 37,000 acres. With this went the privilege of taking a large part of the oil out of it immediately!

It developed that when Doheny entered his bid for the offset drilling, as specified in the advertisement, he also submitted an alternate bid including the entire reserve, and that ultimately this was the bid which Secretary Fall accepted. None of the other competing bidders were informed that such a contract was in contemplation.

And now came the high light of the whole transaction. The wells alleged to be menacing the reserve, and thus necessitating the offset drilling, were Standard Oil wells—sunk on the land to which Secretary Fall had validated the Standard's title!

In this case it again paralleled the Teapot Dome deal. Fall's excuse for leasing Teapot Dome was that it was being drained, and the wells alleged to be draining it were wells sunk under leases made by Fall himself! Moreover, in the instance of Teapot Dome, it was shown that the wells charged with the drainage were yielding royalties to the Government averaging more than 25 per cent of their production, while under the Sinclair contract, the wells sunk inside the Dome as a "protective measure," have yielded royalties to the Government of only 17 per cent. This provoked Senator Thomas Walsh to remark that it would have been a public blessing if the outside wells had drained the whole Dome.

Mr. Fall Gets a Job

The similarity between the cases goes even further. After making the leases, Fall left the Cabinet, and accepted employment from Sinclair. Doheny testified, under questioning, that he also had recently employed Fall to represent him in financial matters of great moment. He added the enlightening information that he and Fall had been close friends for more than 30 years.

The Navy's reserve supply of oil in the ground is going fast. Sinclair and Doheny are exploiting their "grants" on a huge scale. Even the royalty oil which they are supposed to be turning over to the Government is, in fact, being taken by them in exchange for storage tanks, docks and other equipment which they were authorized, by Secretaries Fall and Denby to construct for the Navy.

While the great nations of Europe are wrangling bitterly and belligerently over oil reserves for their navies, the United States is watching the rapid disappearance of its own vast reserve into the tanks of two great oil magnates.

Of course, both of these gentlemen are "patriots." They will be even more "patriotic" when another war comes along, and they can sell this oil from the Government's fields to the Government itself! And better still, they will have destroyed possible government competition in the sale of this oil to the people—the farmers and the workers.

There is the rub. They have fastened their clutches so much the stronger on America's supply of oil—which is becoming more and more necessary for our industrial life. What have you to say about it?

Peace on Earth

THE hour has struck. Another year is before us—366 days in which to do something effective for Progress and Peace.

What will a check-up show that we are doing? We have just got successfully through a holiday season with its usual slogans and by-words. "Peace on earth" was the theme. It flooded the press. From a thousand pulpits it was proclaimed. Books, magazines and feature articles took up the refrain. Will Irwin issued another book, appropriately entitled "Christ or Mars"—pleading with Christianity and Judaism to join hands to strangle the God of War. But what in reality does it all mean? What is being done in a concrete way to halt the nationalistic hatreds, the political intrigues and the commercial entanglements that lead to mass murder?

The literature of the day gives a discouraging answer. Dr. Earle, in his book on the Bagdad Railway, shows that England and France have taken up the struggle over control of the Turk and his rich domains—where the defeat of Germany left off. Scott Nearing, in his booklet on "Oil and the Germs of War," points to the fight going on, relentlessly, vigorously, in Mexico, in Mesopotamia, all over the world, for mastery of oil. Everywhere there is "breeding the bacteria of violence," as Nitti, the Italian statesman, bitterly cries out.

Information comes to us almost daily of the elaborate fighting apparatus that France, the new Prussia, has built up. It is bigger than the German machine, excelling in modern devices of slaughter: air forces, submarines, poison gases. Such a grand array of killing-machines cannot be for Germany alone—the stricken Germany which France professes to fear. Our own country continues to loan money lavishly to nations which are building up every day larger and larger armaments. We are as guilty as the Europe we hypocritically condemn for the Balkanized condition existing all over that continent.

"Every loan which America makes to European countries maintaining large standing armies," says Nitti (no matter for what purpose the loan may be), whether it take the form of buying shares in an industry, or of lending money to local bodies, produces nothing but harm, because it serves indirectly to perpetuate the state of disorder and of war which characterizes the life of Europe."

It is to America that pacifist Europe looks to stop this bloody business—to halt the loans that turn ploughshares into swords, to curb the sale and manufacture of munitions, to weaken the game of international finance which is hurrying forward new wars and new race destruction. It looks to British Labor, too, which can do a powerful lot, and which is pledged to drastic measures. But even British Labor cannot carry out its full program without some support from America, at present in the hands of Reactionaries and militarists.

The situation, as many labor organizations realize, calls for a conference on the part of American Labor, to review the field and see what further can be done. The International Association of Machinists took the first step in 1920, when their Rochester convention passed a vigorous resolution, calling upon the organized metal workers and related crafts of all nations to effect an agreement for concerted action against the war-making forces. The

International Metal Workers' Federation, as a result, urged the metal workers of each nation to take measures toward the supplanting of war-making materials, step by step, for production that would make for peace.

"Take the Profits out of War" is the challenge of the Machinists to the war-making powers. As a beginning, they demand the cessation of the manufacture of munitions in private factories for this government. That means that American munitions for the American government can only be made in the government's own plants. This proposal is embodied in a bill—the Brookhart-Hull bill—now before the United States Congress. Its number is 742 in the Senate and 2702 in the House.

As Congressman Harry E. Hull, one of the authors of the bill, says: "Money paid to private industries (for munitions) is worse than wasted." He cites in proof of that the following summary by the League of Nations of the evil acts of private munitions manufacturers:

"Six objections to the untrammelled private manufacture of the means of waging war were listed in a commission report to the League of Nations, September 15, 1921. They are weighty. Think about them.

"1. That armament firms have been active in fomenting war scares and in persuading their own countries to adopt warlike policies and to increase their armaments.

"2. That armament firms have attempted to bribe government officials, both at home and abroad.

"3. That armament firms have disseminated false reports concerning the military and naval programs of various countries, in order to stimulate armament expenditure.

"4. That armament firms have sought to influence public opinion through the control of newspapers in their own and foreign countries.

"5. That armament firms have organized international armament rings through which the armament race has been accentuated by playing off one country against another.

"6. That armament firms have organized international armament trusts which have increased the price of armaments sold to governments."

The American Federation of Labor has on two occasions thrown its influence in favor of the Brookhart-Hull proposal. Every labor man and every friend of Peace should do likewise—adding to the volume of the demand for the ending of war-profiteering.

Of less immediate prospects of accomplishment, but of even wider possibilities, is the plan of the organized women workers of America for the Outlawry of War. Not intended as a universal cure-all for the evils of war, it is a measure which will definitely link warfare up with other crimes. The war-maker will be stamped officially with the mark of Cain. Is not that worth while? The National Women's Trade Union League, whose headquarters are at Chicago, will welcome the help of all in this important effort.

"Peace on Earth"—let us strain every energy to make it real! It is a challenge to everyone of us—deep and serious. The urgent question is: "Can we lovers of Peace outrun the war-makers before they have hurried on another holocaust?"

Sabotage a la Mode

Wherein We Learn Why New Haven Officials Are Not in Jail

CONNECTICUT—Promised Land of fake doctors, irregular marriages and other evidences of petty-minded graft—has added industrial crime to its untarnished record of stupidity.

This Sovereign State, rejoicing in its Yankee "freedom," has sent Ernest Schleiffer to prison for five years for "inciting to sabotage." This Sovereign State has thereby shown its cringing servility to the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad—the Road of Graft par excellence.

Ernest Schleiffer was in charge of the machinists' end of the shopmen's strike on the New Haven. He is a buoyant soul, an excellent organizer. He filled the men with enthusiasm. He made them see their fight for freedom. He was the spirit of their stiff resistance to the plunderers at the head of the road.

But this robber crew did not propose that any man should interfere with their plans of loot. They called on their spies to "get" Schleiffer. Two of these men attended a meeting at which he spoke, urging the men to continue the fine record they had made, urging them never to surrender to the road.

But the spies—and they alone of the thousands who attended that meeting—heard Schleiffer advocate "sabotage," wilful destruction of the road's property. What a convenient "find" for the New Haven, whose rotten, run-down road, under the stress of the strike, endangered every hour the lives of thousands of its passengers! Its own "sabotage," as the Labor Bureau showed in the case prepared for the Shop Crafts for presentation to the State Utilities Commission, was responsible for the existing conditions—and every day it committed numerous crimes in sending out trains unfit for service.

Before a jury of twelve "Yankee renegaders," as their kinsman, James Russell Lowell, would have called them, he was tried—and found guilty on the evidence of these spies. Of what stuff "dicks" are made the organized workers know full well. Their infamy has been laid bare for the benefit of the "public" in Sidney Howard's study on the "Labor Spy." It was to the words of these men that the jury paid heed—not to Schleiffer's clear-cut declaration of innocence.

Too bad that the shade of Lowell was not present in the court room to quote to them those descriptive lines from his "Bigelow Papers," written in the heat of the fight for negro freedom:

"I du believe in Freedom's cause,
Ez fur away ez Paris is;
I love to see her stick her claws
In them infarnal Pharisees;
It's wal enough agin a king
To dror resolves an' triggers,—
But libbaty's a kind o' thing
That don't agree with niggers."

Yes, "libbaty's a kind o' thing that don't agree" with freemen fighting for their rights, says the New Haven.

And the marionettes on the jury mumble their agreement.

Why is the New Haven itself not at the bar of justice, defending itself on the charge of "sabotage"? In this art it is among the most proficient. How it has sand-bagged the gaping commuter from Gotham, and the other riders of its rails—lo! these many years. Because kind, inquiring friend, it does it according to the present use and wont. It does it in the approved style—the Big Business way.

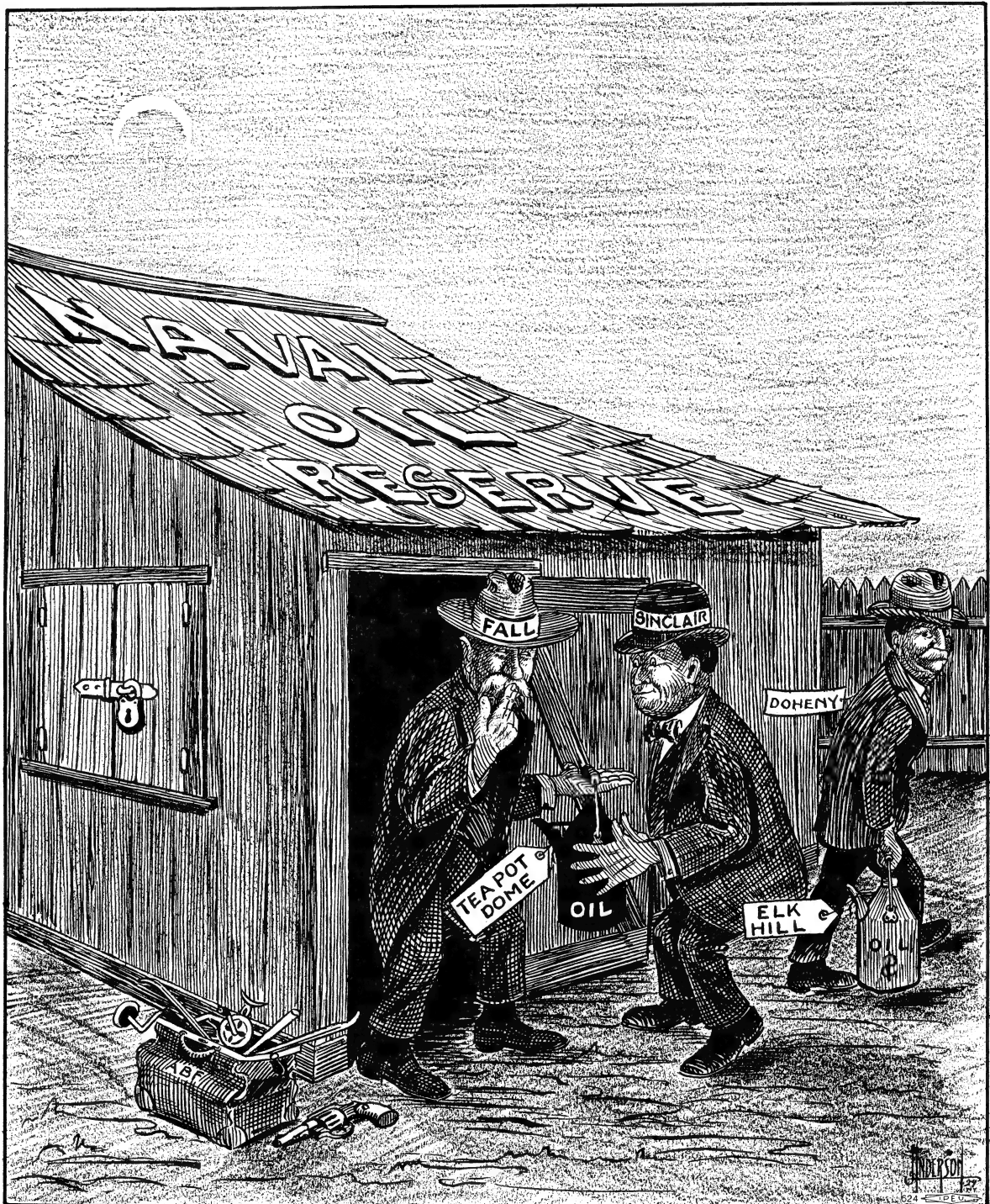
Thorstein Veblen lets us a little deeper into the secret in his latest book "Absentee Ownership," a secret which he has probed for us before. Sabotage is written all over the present system. It is of the very essence of the system. It pays the Absentee Owners and Profit Makers to keep production down. "The material interest of the underlying population (which is just plain you and me) is best served by a maximum output at a low cost, while the business interests of the industry's owners may best be served by a moderate output at an enhanced price."

Ponder over these words of Veblen, and be reminded that sabotage—legal sabotage—and the System are one and inseparable:

"Ownership confers a legal right of sabotage, and absentee ownership vests the owner with the power of sabotage at a distance by help of the constituted authorities whose duty it is to enforce the legal rights of citizens. The legal right of sabotage is commonly exercised only to an extent of a partial and fluctuating unemployment and material equipment and therefore of the available workmanship; only to such an extent as seems wise for the enforcement of terms satisfactory to the owners—only so far as 'the traffic will bear.'"

So there is on foot constantly on the part of the business interests, through unemployment, through holding land out of use, through destroying harvests and goods to boost the prices, through buying up new inventions to strangle them, a conspiracy to sabotage legally the whole means of production, by which you and I are fed. Never was a finer piece of sabotage done than by the railroads themselves in sending their locomotives to the "scab" outside shops for repairs, paying there five times as much as they did for repair work in their own union shops.

Ernest Schleiffer has been sent to prison for "inciting to sabotage," an act which he did not commit, an act which it would be folly for him to commit, as the workers would suffer the worse thereby. Mr. Howard Elliott and the other officials of the New Haven are not in prison, but sit softly in velvet, enjoying their excellent salaries. Because they are the apostles of Sabotage according to the moral fashion—"a la mode," as it were. But Ernest Schleiffer is in reality a free man. While Mr. Elliott and the other officials of the New Haven are pitiful slaves to a system which they cannot but obey, if they wish to hold their jobs—and to the Investment Bankers, at whose nod they must tremble.



Drawn by J. F. Anderson for LABOR AGE.

GENEROSITY

The above is an accurate sketch of Mr. Fall "helping" his friends Sinclair and Doheny at the expense of the farmers and workers, as caught by the Senate Investigating Committee. For particulars as to "how it is done," see the instructive article on page 10 of this issue. It is most revealing.

"Thumbs Down" for "Kareful Kal"

So Say the Workers—With the Employers, Strangely, Disagreeing

FOR YOUR BENEFIT

THE use of "K" in these headlines is not due to a typographical error—though modesty compels us to admit that such have occasionally occurred in the past—nor to infringement on the patent devices of a more or less well-known knightgown fraternity. Many an ambitious razor blade, pewter pot, non-rust invention and other fabrications of the business world have played upon the "K" as a substitute for hard "C." It is part of the drive and dash of American Business advertising methods. LABOR AGE desires above all to show its own thorough-going Americanism. We mean to advertise!

And the first item in our advertising program is this press digest itself—henceforth containing regular news from the employers' camp as well as from our own. Reading parts of it will be like a good slumming trip into "What the Other Half Thinks."

"KAREFUL KAL KOOLIDGE"—so Will Rogers styles the "silent" one from Massachusetts—has delivered his message to an awaiting world.

Main Street stood breathless as his Words of Wisdom came hurtling through the air, over the radio. At least, so our "molders of public opinion" inform us. Babbling Babbitts all over the land—from Hell's Gate to the Golden Gate—exhaled a deep sigh of relief before it was half-way over with. They joyfully got drunk on prohibition liquor before the last word had sounded—"because our Constitutional rights will stand, firm and untouched" under the administration of Mr. Frank Stearns' good man. The department store magnate has not backed him of police strike fame in vain.

"Mellon's Food" was recommended to the hunger of the land as a strong and stimulating diet. ("Mellon's Food," according to the *Arbitrator*, is the correct scientific term for the Secretary of the Interior's prescription for the ills of the poor and oppressed trust magnates and war profiteers—including, of course, himself.) Reduce taxes for the rich, quoth Calvin, and thus relieve the poor. Help the veterans in every way, but do not give them the most effective help, the bonus. Solve the coal problem, but do not consider public ownership for a moment. Conserve the water power rights of the nation by turning them over to the tender mercies of the Secretary of Commerce, committed to their private exploitation for the benefit of the Profit Makers. Bring peace and good will among nations by rushing a larger army and navy, with all the devilish death-dealing poisons and weapons of which we can think.

This new program of "Bread and Peace" for Those That Have has received a merry welcome in the business press. Even Democratic papers—forgetting their partisan mask for a moment and lapsing into clear-cut class consciousness—have applauded its taxation features and its transportation "plan." The *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot* is even given to threatening jocularly in defending it. "The economy program," it says, "will make better speed when Congressmen begin to realize that if taxes don't fall the axes will."

And our friends, the Enemy, of course, are equally enthusiastic. The *Railway Review* likes the President's "brevity of speech." In a few words, it informs us, "he supplied the best refutations we have seen of the current attacks on section 15a of the Transportation Act"—the section dealing with "guarantees" of "fair and reasonable rates" to the roads, under which they have thrived so mightily. Which meaneth, gentle reader, that Calvin has done a better job for the railroads, they feel, than the millions of dollars of railroad propaganda itself has done.

The road organ quotes with approval these words of "our" President: "To make a rate that does not yield a fair return results in confiscation, and confiscation rates are, of course, unconstitutional." Ah! "Confiscation"—what steals have been perpetrated on the dazed and dazzled "public" in thy name. Just now, ten billion good, cold dollars are being presented to the railroads in increased valuations—on land given them originally by this government!—to prevent "confiscation." Some day, mayhap, the "public" may invert the process, and discover that "confiscation" is not such a bad word after all. So think some folks already out in the wild and woolly West.

There is one question that partly divides the railroad owning brethren. It is the question of consolidation of roads into fifteen to twenty systems. The big roads are for it; and with them agree the Harding-Coolidge-Fall-Wood pirate crew of oil land thieves and stock gamblers. The little roads are partly against it. In the **Railway Age** a warning voice is raised by General Manager W. E. Farris of the Great Northern. Regional consolidation is "a long stride toward government ownership," says he. The "better service at lower cost" is only bait held out to the "public" by the big roads, in order to gobble up the smaller brethren. "Bait" is a good word, for all the interesting fairy tales put out by the roads during



Machinist Journal.

TIREDSOME READING

the past year, to show their poverty on an 8.9 per cent dividend. But consolidation seems written in the economic stars, despite "Brother" Farris, and public ownership is the remedy after all, say the rail unions.

One more moment with the employers before returning to the Coolidge message. "Iron Makers Break Production Records" declares the **Iron Trade Review**, organ of the iron and steel industry in impressive headlines. The last year was the banner year in iron and steel. "The tendencies toward greater production per stack and greater output per man were carried forward throughout the year with results far beyond the expectations of a year ago." What did the men get out of it? Brother Hannon tells that on page 17.

Both the journal quoted and the **Iron Age** agree that the "outlook is bright" in steel, though the latter thinks that "1923 set a hard pace for 1924," which the coming year may not equal. For the workers this indicates that economic conditions are with them in iron and steel, and that this is

a good time to push organization and press their demands. "As much as we can get" should be the iron and steel workers slogan. Particularly is this so with no great immigration wave to harass them.

Now, what do the labor papers think of the message of the Man from Massachusetts? They understand him thoroughly—as thoroughly as the Minnesota farmers who howled him down at their State Fair a brief while ago. They repeat, in different words and phrases, but with like intent, the judgment of the **Seattle Union Record**: "The heart of every profiteer beat with joy (at the message)."

It will go down in history as a Wall Street and trust message, and as such it will be dealt with by the people when they have the opportunity to vote on it." They endorse and reprint the special release of the **People's Reconstruction League**, showing that Mr. Mellon's tax reduction program—for the benefit of Big Business—"has been enthusiastically endorsed by the United States Chamber of Commerce, state and local chambers of commerce and big profiteering business generally." Because this is the program handed to President Coolidge by the Chamber of Commerce itself! This is why it has all come about, as explained by that release:

"The plea that corporations should be allowed to profiteer because poor widows and orphans own some stock in them has gone stale, so Secretary Mellon talks about reducing taxes on earned incomes, while he is actually proposing to cut taxes on unearned incomes of \$100,000 to \$5,000,000 about in half. One-half of 97 per cent of all the largest incomes is derived from secure investments and is unearned. Within a short time the exemption of government securities from taxation will be repealed, and this wide avenue of escape from taxation will be closed to America's richest tax dodgers. They are panic stricken.

"Secretary Mellon knows the necessity of sugar-coating a bitter pill. While trying to sell the pill so bitter to patriotic Americans of cutting the taxes of the rich in half, and so saving them several hundred millions of taxes a year, he sugar-coats it into a recommendation that congress repeal the tax on 'admissions to movies, etc.' to save poor folks a few million dollars a year. The People's Reconstruction League opposed this and all other nuisance taxes, and urged the repeal of them all, but—why don't the United States Chamber of Commerce, President Coolidge and Secretary Mellon join us in recommending the repeal of the skyscraper tariff admission taxes on most manufactured necessities of life, which are costing the people with earned incomes about \$2,000,000,000 a year?

"Answer—Probably because those tariff admission taxes are collected by the rich, who are trying to get their income taxes cut in half, and who are expected to pay off the deficit of the Republican national committee, and to fill their doughbags for the 1924 election.

"Lest we forget, also Secretary Mellon's aluminum trust is bolstered up in its monopolistic prices to consumers by a big tariff admission tax on aluminum."

Senator LaFollette, writing in **LaFollette's Monthly**, has hit the nail on the head when he says: "President Coolidge's first message to Congress is an able, concise and frank presentation of the standpat reactionary theory of government.

... There is nothing in the message that will offend the most sensitive of the big business interests. There is little in the message that will satisfy the mass of the American people."

On the transportation sections of the message he declares with equal clearness and straightforwardness, typical of "Fighting Bob": "The President places himself squarely on record in defense of the Esch-Cummins law—a law which has been repudiated by the people of every state in which it has been an issue, and which is responsible for present extortionate railroad rates, based upon inflated and fictitious values of railroad property."

So also finds **Labor**, organ of the rail unions, the **Machinists' Journal** and the rest of the labor press. It is "thumbs down" for Calvin, so far as Labor is concerned.

It is also "thumbs down" for the United States Supreme Court—Privilege's special plaything. Never, practically, has that body been with the people on any great property issue. Remember the Dred Scott decision, as one example! Looking over its recent record, what can the workers and farmers of America have for it but "contempt"? "We in this country," comments the **Life and Labor Bulletin**, organ of the National Woman's Trade Union League, "have abdicated our power as a people and permitted the United States Supreme Court to assume a veto power over Congress; through the opinion of five out of nine of its members, to become our House of Lords."

This same bulletin also announces the beginning of the campaign for a child labor amendment to our National Constitution. Two bodies have the campaign under way, working in conjunction with each other. These are "the Permanent Conference for the Abolition of Child Labor, of which President Gompers of the American Federation of Labor is chairman," and the "Children's Amendment Committee, composed of seventeen women's organizations belonging to the Women's Joint Congressional Committee." The amendment—now before Congress—will have to pass its two houses and then be ratified by the states.

"We find ourselves confronted with the amazing fact," says the bulletin, "that because of two adverse Supreme Court decisions it would be futile again to ask our national law-making body to legislate against child labor until we have first empowered that body to act!"

Meanwhile, one of the chief organs of the child labor employers, the **Manufacturers' Record**, of Baltimore, relieves itself of this piffle in its first issue of 1924:

"To all who are not men of good will and who unpatriotically violate the laws of the country and who by their example help to create a spirit of immorality, anarchy and evil of every kind, we can sincerely wish for their own good and ultimate



Steel Workers' Leaflet.

THE POOR

ABOVE we see the steel story simply told. Steel companies have declared big dividends, but state that they must cut wages when introducing a shorter work-day. At that, the much-talked-about 8-hour day is still pretty much of a myth.

Secretary William Hannon of the Steel Workers writes: "About 35 per cent. of the steel workers are employed on the 8-hour basis, about an equal amount on a 10-hour basis, and the balance are working two shifts of 12 hours each. To offset our campaign, the officials of the Steel Corporation have organized soccer clubs, with numerous instructors teaching the workers how to play the game. 'Sucker clubs' would probably be a more fitting name for them, as it is very strange that no move was made to organize these clubs until the union campaign started. The big need at this time is further co-operation from the organizations affiliated with the A. F. of L. More organizers should be placed in the steel districts and favorable action taken by the international unions along the lines pledged."

happiness that the sting of an awakened conscience may quicken them into a new and broader and higher life."

The race of the Pharisee is not yet extinct!

Electioneering With British Labor

Face to Face with the Voter—The Big Enemies of the Workers

By PRINCE HOPKINS

HERE we have an intimate story of the recent British elections, in which the Labor Party rode into a greater measure of power—to the surprise of themselves and the world at large. Hopkins, who is now in Britain, did active electioneering work for the Party, both in speaking and in personal canvassing.

THE election returns in Britain came to most of us as a wonderful surprise. We anticipated some gains for Labor, and the rejection of the Tories' quack pill for Unemployment—the Tariff. But such sweeping gains and such emphatic rejection of the tariff we scarcely hoped for.

Save for a couple of meetings in East Ham, my own share in the campaign was carried on in the London district of Wandford. The candidate whom I assisted was Blizzard, a man old in the service of the Labor Party, though young in spirit.

The most interesting part of the work to me was the house-to-house canvassing of voters. In English towns people mostly live in separate houses. We were thus able to call at each home, from one end of the street systematically to the other, and talk with the man of the household or with his good wife.

The women, of course, also vote—but only if they are thirty or more years of age. Curiously, although it was Labor which helped women into the franchise, their vote is far more conservative than that of the men. This is because their lives are spent indoors, even to a far greater extent than is true of their sex in America. Having little direct contact with the world, they take their opinions ready-made.

Another reason for their conservatism lies doubtless in the very fact that only their older members can vote. Yet many of their ardent leaders are on that account inclining to the left, because it's the Labor Party who advocate reducing the age-requirement.

The Tories and Liberals were greatly pleased at the result of granting women the franchise. Nevertheless, the women are learning, and already vote less conservatively than they did at first. The rents question, so close to the housewife, also swings them toward Labor.

As I went about, talking with one householder after another, I learned much more about English politics and England's problems than I could ever have got from a platform. And much of it is just as true in America as in England, and is probably as true in every other land in the world.

For instance, I learned who are the two greatest enemies of the working class. They are not the Tories and Liberals, nor even the poisonous Rothermere-Beaverbrook press. The two greatest enemies are Tradition and Indifference.

Tradition keeps a man's mind running in the same old groove. You meet every argument he advances. Then you find that these arguments, all of them, were simply outer defences to excuse him for holding to old mental habits. At last he comes out with it: "Our family are an old conservative family; and it's too late to change over now, just before election!" "What has been, will always be!"

But indifference is even a greater enemy than tradition. You start to talk to a voter, and soon discover that he is a fairly intelligent fellow and knows as well as you what must be the effect of the various policies. "But this district will go Labor anyway!" he says, in excusing himself from taking any part. Or, "This is a conservative stronghold; Labor has no chance!" Or else, "The Tory Candidate promised all sorts of things and we voted for him; but nothing ever happened. Then the liberal candidate made wonderful promises, so next time we helped put him in; but he went back on them all. This year we've decided not to vote. Every candidate is out for himself; you can't change human nature!"

Anyone who has at all followed political history knows that this story of candidates' promises and performances is only too true. Men have relied too much upon the political and too little upon the industrial weapon. Nevertheless, the political

can't be abandoned, but must be made an adjunct of the economic. And too many of the third of voters who don't go to the polls are equally indifferent also to their union obligations.

When a man says, "I have no time for politics because I put all my energy into fighting on the industrial battlefield!" we respect him. But nothing will excuse plain all-around laziness.

At the big public meetings I was always introduced as an American who might tell some of the inside facts of American protective tariffs. Of course, the conservatives have been trying to make out that all the prosperity of America is due to protection—its interference with her foreign trade. I had to suggest that the natural resources of our continent were a more adequate explanation of the difference between the prosperity of protectionist America and the poverty of protectionist southern Europe.

To England particularly, whose wealth is founded on her trade in cotton, iron and coal, it would be disastrous to add on import duties. This would increase living expenses—one thing the British workman won't hear of—and raise the cost of producing those exports by which the country lives. Besides, by what are foreign countries to purchase our goods unless by sending us their own? Check imports, and we thus check exports.

Such a measure, which is all the conservatives can offer for unemployment, would employ far fewer men than it would throw onto the street.

There can be no return of prosperity to England until Europe again quiets down. What folly the Tories and Liberals have committed in reducing this country's trade with Russia (which even during the war was over 60,000,000 pounds annually) to 6,000,000 pounds! And in standing by whilst France, plundering the Ruhr, prevents the recovery of central Europe! Sentimentalist America, equally, gives ear to France's plea that she can't pay her debts to us, even while she has unlimited millions to lend the Turks, the Poles, and the Rumanians and other nations for armament.

A million and a half more men are under arms to-day than in 1914! No wonder there's unemployment!

But the Tory doctors have only the quack pill of tariff, and the Liberals can suggest no remedy at all worthy of the name. They want to go on, shaving down the already shamefully inadequate



BRITISH LABOR ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The Battle of the United States and Britain, for "influence" in Mesopotamia, as viewed by the "London Daily Herald."

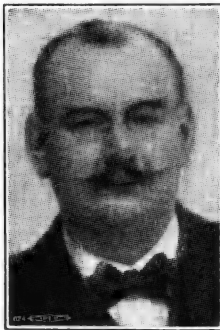
budgets for education and social services. Or, they would make petty economies in postage stamps and the paper used in government offices, while the national debt has mounted from 7,000,000,000 pounds to 7,800,000,000 pounds!

This debt-staggering, unheard-of in its proportions, is the all-darkening menace of the day. It burdens the taxpayer with nearly a million pounds of interest to be paid every day! A million pounds, going mostly to those who stayed at home and lined their pockets whilst other men bled and died.

Only the Labor Party has been bold enough to demand the remedy. By a graduated levy on capital, applying only to the 300,000 persons who have more than 5,000 pounds property apiece, half the debt could be obliterated at a stroke. Holders of 6,000 pounds would need to pay only 50 pounds, but the very wealthy would pay a much bigger proportion.

Therefore the latter have fought the levy tooth and nail, with misrepresentation and outcry. They have likened it to the proposed Swiss levy. This is a false cry, as the Swiss proposal was very different in not exempting joint stock companies or co-operative and friendly societies and in touching smaller fortunes.

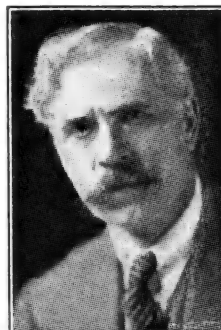
At first I also had fears that the levy would be so drastic and sudden as to cause business failures and further unemployment. But now I know that



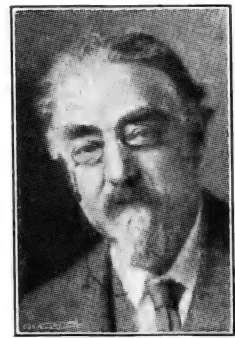
TOM SHAW



ARTHUR HENDERSON



J. RAMSAY McDONALD



SIDNEY WEBB

COMING INTO POWER

FROM its seventh General Election the Labour Party has emerged invigorated and strengthened. Its future as a political force is so fully assured that it should now move forward with increasing confidence, courage and hope." So writes Arthur Henderson, Secretary of the Party, at the close of the recent sweeping victory.

But British Labor has no delusions about the difficult path that lies before it. Says the "Labour Magazine," its organ:

"It would be useless to deny the difficulty and complexity of the political situation arising out of the General Election. No party has a clear majority. It is one of the results of the three-party system now in operation, and likely to continue in operation for a few years. But out of this involved situation one thing emerges clear and unmistakable. The country will not be governed much longer by the present Government. It is almost as certain as human calculations can be that Mr. Ramsay McDonald will be Prime Minister by the time we go to press with the next number of the 'Labour Magazine.' The foremost man of the nation will be he who a few short years ago was abused and misrepresented by every place-seeker, every granite-faced and brass-hearted profiteer, and by many normally reasonable and intelligent persons who allowed their prejudices to sway their judgment." The attacks on McDonald were due to his attitude on the war—and his vindication is much similar to that of our own Senator LaFollette.

Back of him will stand, among many others, Sidney Webb, economist of the Labor Party—whose studies of trade unionism and socialism have instructed and inspired the movement throughout the world. In the Labor Cabinet will also probably appear Tom Shaw, veteran labor leader and party member, who has long held an important place in its counsels. He is one of the staunch champions of affiliation with the Second International. Thus will the Party go into power with the combined assistance of men trained both in the union ranks and in the intellectual arena. Their experiment in government will be well worth watching.

over 90 per cent of those whom it would reach have enough of their wealth either in bonds or shares of joint stock companies, or in government securities, so that little else need be touched. For the per cent or two of cases in which the levy could seriously interfere with the running of a small business provision has been made. They will be allowed to pay in installments spread over several years.

The fact is, that to refuse the levy to-day is only to postpone it till to-morrow. The national debt, under Tory and Liberal management, has increased from 7,000,000,000 pounds to 7,800,000,000 pounds. That the crushing burden of 1,000,000 pounds per day in interest should continue indefinitely spells ruin. Like it or not, the levy must come.

Have the Churches a Message for Labor?

This Voice from Europe Says "No"

By JOSEPH McCABE

IN the June, 1923, issue of "Labor Age," Henry Snell of the British Labour Party told of the more or less close connection of that movement and the British churches. Here is the reverse side of the shield—written by a well-known historical writer and anti-religionist. He raises the question. "Have the Churches a Message for Labor?"—of particular interest now with doctrinal disputes raging in the churches themselves.

A SUSTAINED, fanatical effort is being made to exclude the idea of evolution from the mind of Young America. Already the idea is banned from the primary schools of one State, and there is widely-entertained hope that the ban will spread from primary to higher school, from State to State.

Does it matter to Labor? Can Labor be deeply concerned whether a scientific interpretation of something that happened millions of years ago is or is not admitted to the nature-study class? The scientific intelligence, the subtlest and finest implement of the modern race, has been used too exclusively in sorting out the confusions of a million years ago or a trillion miles away. One of the most amazing features of the phase of race development which we're in is, the way in which the mind, remains early-historic in social, political, and economic questions, while, in theoretical and applied science, it has made great advances. Science is bloodless, non-human, "neutral" in face of our mighty human problems. We know why.

But if there is one respect in which science, whether it wills it or not, has served the modern spirit—has rendered it immense service—it is in establishing this idea of evolution. A very distinguished Austrian pathologist, Professor Virchow, opposed until he died the evolution of man. "You might as well say that man came from a sheep as from an ape," he used to declare. When he died the secret was disclosed by his son-in-law. He—a "Liberal"—had feared that teaching the children of the workers the doctrine of evolution gave them progressive aspirations which threatened the comfortable structure of the Liberal State. He was right. Probably most people will be surprised to learn that the very idea of progress was, as a British historian has recently shown, unknown in any earlier civilization, and known to very few until the period just before

the French Revolution. Even with the eighteenth-century philosophers and the Revolutionaries it was an idea with no deep roots. They were not much advanced beyond the democrats of ancient Athens or Rome.

Up From a Builder of Pyramids

Discovery of evolution was what put the idea of progress on the map. The present somber and obscure position of the worker is one to which neither "the Almighty" nor Nature has "called him." It is a temporary phase. It must evolve, like everything else in the universe. The engineer who now glimpses a Utopia ahead is thinking on the lines of Professor Osborn or David Starr Jordan. Once he was a feudal builder of pyramids. Now he is a skilled self-governing artisan. On the principle of evolution, the third stage will be as much higher than the second as the second is than the first. And this is only the beginning of human time; and the pace gets faster every century. Cut out this doctrine of evolution from modern thought and you slip back to where Spartacus was just two thousand years ago. It is the philosophy of the modern Labor aspiration.

How many of the modern American anti-evolutionists clearly see, and act, on this, need not be inquired. There never was a reaction yet, against the people, in which religion was not associated with money and privilege. But let us take the claim at its face value. Evolution is said to undermine religion. And religion is said to be an essential basis of all progress. So you must cut out the evolution, and let the religious teaching exhale its beneficent influence undisturbed in the child's mind.

Test it. Whenever there is question of the practical bearing of religious ideas, the man who wants sound judgment will freeze out all the rhetoricians. In issues of that sort you can prove

either or both sides by verbiage. But here the acid test of facts is as easy as it is imperative. We have not to wait for great questions to arise before we can test the claims of the divine. They have not merely arisen. We gasp amongst them, as amongst the tentacles of a mighty octopus. Twenty specific moral issues confront Europe and America: twenty fundamental questions of right or wrong.

No Answer to Vivid Questions

Take the fundamental principles which underlie the struggle in every modern civilization: the limit of hereditary wealth (or right to the labor of others), the limit of personal accumulation, the limit of inequality of distribution, the limit of majority authority, and so on. There is not a church in the world that dare face such issues. There is not a departmental gathering of divines that could agree on them. There is not a parochial debating society that dare formulate "the Christian message."

In Europe it is worse. As I write, twelve out of the twenty nations of Europe are preparing for war. Some seek a "Vindication of their glory." Some want territory, some money, some harbors or other economic centers. Has any church in any one of them a word to say? Not a whisper, unless it is to encourage. No one in Europe would dream of consulting them. Their moral impotence is ghastly. Europe smolders and rumbles, and may be aflame in two months, mainly because a great moral issue is not settled: Should there be reparations, and on what scale? And Rome is dumb as Canterbury; the Lutheran church is as "diplomatic" as the Calvinist, or the Wesleyan, or the Congregationalist, or the Unitarian. Religion has not a syllable of message while Europe, dark and confused in mind, intoxicated with false sentiment, reels towards the abyss. Last fall I visited Vienna, Budapesth, Belgrade, Sofia, Adrianople, and Athens. All hummed with tragic blunders. All mortally hated each other. And had thousands of miles of ridiculously undeveloped territory from which they ought to be joyously wresting the blessed reward of labor. Five of the six are again passing under the war-cloud; and not one single preacher, from the Danube to the Aegean, has a word to say about it.

Is it any different in America? Does one ever hear anything beyond the vague platitude of the living wage, and justice and help? From a few individuals, perhaps and there are a thousand

voices or silences against each of these in his own sect.

The appeal that is being made to the Labor movement ignores these facts. It diverts attention to a different matter. Specific moral judgment on an economic or political or international issue is one thing, it says, and the moral sentiment, the moral disposition, is another. Why refuse the latter because you can't get both? Candidly, the churches cannot contribute more than what we may call a disposition of justice toward the solution of the great moral problems of our time. But will the solution ever be found without that disposition? Is not the alternative a series of bloody revolutions and reactions? It is surely something—it is much—to have a great planet-wide force inculcating justice. Labor leaders like Clynes and Henderson, and Socialists like Mrs. Webb, in England actually press religion upon British Labor on that ground. Even H. G. Wells encourages the movement in his detached way.

Who Are the "Just"?

It is this plausible appeal that interests Labor. And the answer of Labor over the greater part of Europe is crisp and clear. Justice is a platitude. There is not a multi-millionaire in the States, not a scheming statesman in Europe or America who does not consider himself just; and there is not a church that dare tell him otherwise, if there be one that thinks it. Take the Vatican. It was on excellent terms with Wilhelm II in regard to Poland. It told the Poles to submit. It displayed the most edifying friendliness toward the Soviet government the moment an approach was made from Moscow. It assured the Socialists of Italy that its gospel of justice alone was a sure basis of democracy; yet the first act of the Fascisti government, after a bloody suppression of the Socialists, an outrage upon every modern principle, was to present the Vatican with the most valuable library in Rome. It blesses the fire-breathing hatred of Bavaria, the zeal of France to get an utterly impossible compensation, the determination of Germany to give no compensation at all, the efforts in Portugal to restore an effete monarchy, the rebellion of the Southern Slavs against the Austrian monarchy, etc., etc. What is Christian justice?

The truth is that the churches are in their teaching intrinsically unfit to educate or help the modern world. The Christian ethic is essentially individualistic. War, poverty, ignorance, slavery,

the subjection of women—what do they matter? The social order curls up, in a few years, like a leaf over a flame. Only the cleanliness of the individual soul matters.

A Sense of Proportion

Grant this doctrine all that it has done. It has kept millions of people, out of thousands of millions, temperate, generous, just in personal relations, honorable. But let us keep a sense of proportion. America had to pass into an age of scepticism before it could conceive Prohibition. The world had to be dosed profoundly with Voltaire before Trade Unions, Pacifism, Antivivisection, Democracy, Feminism, and so on issued from its brain. There are today ten temperate and honorable men against one a century ago; and it is the irreligious countries, not Serbia and Bulgaria, where you find the ten to one. It looks as if Lester Ward was not far astray when he said that intellectual enlightenment would bring these personal virtues (as far as they are virtues) where creeds had failed. Put eight countries of

Europe in the order of their intellectual enlightenment: France, England, Germany, Italy, Austria, Spain, Serbia, Bulgaria. That is also precisely the order in which they display independence of Christianity, a large improvement of mass-character, and a sense of social injustice.

In any case, these personal virtues are not the great concern of our world. Bishop Gore, one of the ablest prelates of the English Church, has said in a recent work that England has lost even "faith in God," and he sees no prospect of a "return." But the pit yawns for us, of course, unless we return. Well, what are the symptoms? He does not attempt to dispute that there is in England more sobriety, less gambling and violence, less cruelty to animals, children and women, less crime of every sort, than ever before. These, mind you, are the "self-regarding virtues." All that he can do is to allude, very vaguely, to the desperate economic condition of Europe; on which neither he nor any other Bishop has attempted to say a helpful word.

(Continued from page II)

nus Johnson. A similar situation may face them in the Presidential election this year. Coolidge will undoubtedly be manipulated into the Republican nomination, and Hiram, if he should win, would be no more fit, from the Farmer-Labor viewpoint. Of late he has acquired the interesting habit of voting solidly with Reaction.

The one hope of the Progressives within the old parties rests in McAdoo. He it is that lies between the Farmer-Labor forces and the formation of a third party. Although many of the folks in the Northwest, who are committed to a third ticket, proclaim him as a "bogus Progressive," he retains the support and admiration of the railroad unions. With them he stands as high as Senator LaFollette, despite LaFollette's far superior record of battling for the common good. If McAdoo wins the nomination, the Progressive forces will be divided. A third party will have a hard time functioning. But the nomination of the Californian is by no means assured. The Democratic Old Guard may even welcome a Third Party as a means of splitting the Republican camp. They feel some delight in the "breaking away from the traces" that we are now witnessing in Washington.

Therein lies the third party hope. It would represent a great class alliance—bound to become stronger in time because of economic conditions. At its head would stand logically Robert M. LaFollette, and its program, equally logically, would proclaim three-party ownership and control of railroads and other utilities. If that sort of thing can be brought about, it means a great future for this alliance.



WORLD'S BEST KNOWN FARMER

Labor History in the Making

In the U. S. A.

Louis F. Budenz, in Cooperation with the Board of Editors

HOLLYWOOD AND THE SPRAY MACHINE

WHILE useless millionaires are throwing away their lives for the sake of a few blissful moments with moving picture actresses at Hollywood, the organized workers—or at least part of them—are taking definite steps to lengthen their own span of life.

The Wisconsin State Conference of Painters has entered the lists against industrial disease. They are carrying on in their state the good work begun by the New York District Council. They have enlisted the aid of the efficient Workers' Health Bureau, which has been of such signal service to the workers all over the country.

The enemy that the Wisconsin painters is fighting is the Spray Machine. It is a substitute for brush painting, and operates under a heavy pressure. It throws the poisonous paint spray and fumes in all directions. The painter must breathe this air. The risk of ill health as a result is increased four times over the dangers connected with the use of the brush. Can you wonder that Wisconsin painters have determined to take steps to curb this man-eating monster?

The Wisconsin Industrial Commission has drawn up a set of regulations intended to cut down the dangers of spray painting. These required medical examinations of the men, under control of the employers, prohibition of work upon the spray machine for men "easily susceptible" to poisoning, and other worthless measures. Worthless, we say, for in these two instances cited: on the one hand, the employers could do as they pleased, with the medical records of the men in their own hands, and on the other, all human beings are susceptible to poisoning, especially from the death-dealing poisons of the painting trade—lead, turpentine, wood alcohol, and the frightful benzole.

At the request of the Wisconsin painters, and acting as their representative and that of the Brotherhood, Miss Harriett Silverman, Director of the Workers' Health Bureau, appeared before the Wisconsin Industrial Commission at its public hearing in Milwaukee and showed the fallacy of its proposed "regulations." The Wisconsin painters do not want "regulations" that will never regulate, but the abolition of spray painting itself. The evidence presented by Miss Silverman was so strong that the Commission had to withdraw action on its regulations. It decided to hold further public hearings, where the matter could be gone into more thoroughly.

As the Workers' Health Bureau states: "In the absence of any adequate safety device, organized painters throughout the country must prohibit spray painting." Success to the Badger

painters in their fight! The issue at the present time is: Death to the Spray Machine or a havoc of premature workers' deaths from it!" In the meantime, painters' local unions can always find an able and effective champion for their health rights in the Workers' Health Bureau—zealously eager to extend its field of usefulness.

(Tribute must also be paid, incidentally, to Secretary Phillip Zaussner of District 9, Brother I. Silverman of L. U. 261, and the officers and members of the other New York locals, who are continuing their fine health clinic—of so much real value to the workers to date.)

THE HATTERS GET "MAD"—WITH GOOD RESULTS

AT the close of a particularly warm session of the recent international convention of the United Hatters of North America, Brother Menendez of that union jokingly said to a labor onlooker: "At last you have seen us real mad hatters in session."

He referred to the fame which the droll Lewis Carroll has given to their profession, with his Mad Hatter in "Alice in Wonderland." But today the hatters are "mad," earnestly angry—not at individuals, but at disease-producing conditions in their trade.

At Danbury, Conn., an old method of dying hats has been revived, whereby the men are compelled to dip their bare hands and arms into dye vats. Many serious infections have occurred, some cases resulting in gangrene. Locals 10 and 11 of the United Hatters immediately got busy. They applied to the Workers' Health Bureau for a chemical analysis of the dyes used in the Danbury shops. This analysis, the results of which will soon be announced, will determine future action in fighting those methods of dying which produce disease or death.

The same locals also called on the Health Bureau to aid them in another important respect—of interest to all local unions in all trades. At a conference at Bridgeport with the Commissioner of Compensation, Brother Fred Fuhrman of the Hatters, Vice-President John J. Eagan of the Connecticut Federation of Labor, and Miss Silverman of the Bureau urged that members suffering from mercury poisoning and other industrial diseases be entitled to compensation under the state act. Quite an advance was made toward this end. The whole question will be settled at a further conference this month. The Hatters will also hereafter have a representative present at all the hearings of the Compensation Commissioners on cases coming out of their own locals.

So it pays to get "mad" at evil trade conditions—when such make us become intelligently busy at changing them.

UNION PLAYS

UNION efforts at union-owned industry do not end with garment factories, co-operative creameries or building construction corporations. In Gotham you can enjoy an evening of pleasure at a theater, union-owned, at a play, union-conducted. You will have the satisfaction of seeing an association, which owes much of its strength to the loyal support of "stars," endeavoring for the sake of the dramatic art, to destroy or weaken the "star system."

The theater is the Equity Theater, and the play during the last month was "Queen Victoria"—an exceedingly difficult piece of art to stage and carry through successfully. It has now been replaced by "Neighbors," following the regular Equity schedule.

"Queen Victoria" took the critics by storm. It was declared to be a "worthy companion piece to Drinkwater's Abraham Lincoln." It was held up as a play that would set a standard for future comparison. It was found to be "faultlessly staged," and to be "superbly acted."

Labor men and friends of labor, when in New York, may well spend an evening at the Equity Theatre—not merely because it is a union venture that deserves support, but because also of the fine work done there. The Actors Equity Association has built up a strong organization in the legitimate field, and has shown a fighting spirit that many older unions might envy. It has loyally remained within the Labor Movement, despite the numerous efforts to induce it to sever connections with the organized workers.

"JIM" MAURER INSTRUCTS A BEWILDERED GENTLEMAN

WHAT a woeful picture maketh the tired business man. Friend, if you have a heart, take pity on him. He is fidgety. His sleep is disturbed. Sweats and a heavy, sweet taste assail him. Something is afoot; it is the "reds" again. They are everywhere. None know when they may strike. Even Samuel Gompers, says a recent "authority," is a Communist in disguise.

This neurosis of the poor seller-of-goods is fed by one Fred R. Marvin, among others. As we have painfully recorded before, this gentleman conducts a "Searchlight" department in the **New York Commercial**, giving every good New York business man a new set of chills and fevers every morning for breakfast. He puts down therein all the movements that are destroying our Government and stealing away the blessings of the Capitalist System from us and our children, from the A. F. of L. to the Committee of 48.

Recently he recorded "Jim" Maurer, of Pennsylvania, as one of the bad, bad men. "Jim" felt peeved and wrote Mr. Marvin a letter. "Jim" felt that he had not been made bad enough, and protested against such treatment. To the bewildered Mr. Marvin came this letter on the morning of December 21st (we quote in part):

"May I advise that you have your searchlight inspected by some competent expert? Its exposures, as described by you, lead me to believe that your machine is either an old, wornout, antiquated one, or, if new, then perhaps it is cracked. At all events, whether now, or old, it is terribly out of fix. In your sub-head, you say, 'The

Searchlight will carry up-to-date and reliable information' and then you proceed to dish up unreliable, moss-covered misinformation. I do not mean that your entire article is untruthful. No, its greatest weakness is that it is misleading and does not tell your readers all that I feel they have a right to know. I find no fault for what you said about me, but feel a bit peeved because you do not say more.

"For example, you failed to mention that I was also a member of the American Commission on Conditions in Ireland, or that I am connected with the Pennsylvania Committee on Penal Affairs, or was, recently, appointed by Governor Pinchot as chairman of the State Commission on Old Age Assistance, or that I am connected with the Child Welfare Association which aims to prevent the exploitation of children. If your searchlight were capable of searching, you might also, without difficulty, connect me with the American Birth Control League and that, along with the Workers' Educational Bureau of America. I have a State Branch right here in the Federation's Harrisburg office, with Dr. Richard W. Hogue as director; that I have written many pamphlets and books, contributed to magazines and newspapers; that one of the books I wrote was the 'American Cossack,' a book opposing the State Constabulary, also a booklet on 'Americanism,' in which I actually quoted from the Declaration of Independence and Constitution to prove to my readers that my friends and I are the real Americans as understood by the founders of this Republic. And so I might continue pointing to a great many more defects in your 'Searchlight.'"

FOR THE GERMAN WORKERS

FROM stricken Germany has come an appeal that the American workers cannot fail to heed.

Over 40 per cent. of the German industrial population are today either totally unemployed or working a few hours a week. They are unable to earn even a bare subsistence. The union movement, as a result, is in grave danger of collapse.

Because of this state of affairs, the American Federation of Labor has called upon the trade unions of this country to rally, financially, to the aid of the German Federation of Trade Unions. A special committee of representative labor men has been appointed by the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. to collect funds and transmit them across the water.

The money thus raised will be used solely to maintain the organization of the workers. "If the German labor movement is not assisted," reads the A. F. of L. call for help, "in this dire time of need the achievements of forty years of struggle will be wiped out."

Can any of us ignore this cry for help from the German workers—asking for justice and the wherewithal to carry on in the struggle for justice? There is only one answer to this question. Write a letter today to Washington—to Frank Morrison, Secretary of the American Federation of Labor, enclosing a check or money order for our heavily-beset German brothers. This is not a contribution to charity, remember, but to something higher and better—Justice and Self-Help.

IN EUROPE

"RUHR OR RUIN"

CAVEMAN art has just been unearthed in France. It indicates, according to the *Literary Digest*, that the land of the Gaul was one of the favorite "stamping grounds" of our prehistoric ancestor. No doubt. For the present political outlook of the ruling class in that land smacks still of the caveman variety.

The policy of the French Government may be aptly called "The Ruhr or Ruin!" They want the whole hog or none—the whole of the rich German iron and steel country. At present, so far as physical possession goes, it looks as though they have won their point. French iron and steel magnates are dictating the German industrial policy more and more. The invaders seem to be in the Ruhr to stay.

But disquieting clouds are on the sky. The cost of occupation in lost man power is by no means a light one. The franc has been showing much giddiness of its own of late—giving some signs of imitating the mark. Then, there is British Labor. The election across the Channel has set Poincaré a-puzzling. How can he handle these labor gentlemen? Their foreign program is strongly and clearly anti-Poincaré. It is against the Ruhr invasion. It is for a new deal on the continent. And it does not carry with it the suspicion of being merely the plaything of British capitalists.

The situation encouraged the French Socialists to challenge the Poincaré Government on its German policy a week after the British election. M. Leon Blum, for that party, charged in Parliament that the occupation had cost France 700,000,000 francs (normally \$140,000,000). The receipts from the occupation were only 525,000,000 francs (normally \$105,000,000). He declared that the Ruhr invasion has ruined Germany and imperilled France."

Much laughter greeted M. Blum's final shot at Poincaré: "Following Clemenceau, you are a thrower-down of Governments; but you operate abroad. You have already bowled over Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Bonar Law and Mr. Baldwin." The implication was that it was about time to bowl over Poincaré himself and his foreign "mess."

WHAT WILL COME NEXT? — A PROPHECY

GUESSING has become the leading indoor and outdoor sport of Britain.

"Contemptible humbug"—as the labor leader, J. R. Clynes, has termed the Baldwin protection issue—has been overwhelmingly defeated. The question now arises: "What shall be done about it?"

England finds herself in the most peculiar Parliamentary situation that she has faced for many a year. No party has a majority. Both of the old parties have suffered a serious set-back. Mr. Baldwin has sent the Tories hurling down into the political abyss. The British will have nothing of Protection—they reject it today as decisively as

in the days of Chamberlain. The Premier's plan of a strong inter-colonial alliance within the Empire, based on a preferential tariff between the "dependencies" and the Mother Country, had suffered serious blows from the colonies themselves before the election came to pass. The colonies have grown and waxed strong, and no longer need the leading strings of the Seat of Empire. They demanded concessions on the part of Britain, almost too great for Britain to grant.



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NEXT!

The Liberals are in no better position. They have gained some seats, it is true. But their much-heralded and highly-financed Asquith-Lloyd George alliance has not made them the official opposition. They have not gained as many seats as Labor. It is the latter party alone, young and vigorous and challenging, that has secured a smashing victory—more than it even dared to hope for. Despite the capital levy—the "scarecrow" of the campaign—despite its bold stand for nationalization, it comes back with 192 members in the new Parliament.

The line-up of the parties on national issues is interesting, and gives a key to what is to follow. On a new foreign policy, withdrawal of British troops from the Ruhr, recognition of Soviet Russia, help for the unemployed through public works and housing under governmental auspices, the Liberals will probably stand with Labor. On the capital levy and nationalization, Liberals and Tories will undoubtedly unite against Labor. That is the situation in a nutshell.

Under these circumstances, Mr. Baldwin will almost certainly retire from control when Parliament meets this month. The King will call on Ramsay MacDonald to form a Labor Cabinet, and Labor cannot refuse to assume this responsibility.

As the **London Daily Herald**, its organ, points out, Labor owes a great duty to the unemployed. "They are our most pressing problem. Their condition is bound up closely with foreign policy." Something must be done for them at once. The old parties having failed to do anything, Labor cannot beg off when offered the chance, even though it have no majority. Again, Labor cannot afford at this time to enter another General Election. It has no huge funds at its disposal, such as the Tories and Liberals have.

At the same time, the Liberals must nurse their strength, if they hope to exist longer. If they go in with the Tories, they will go—quickly out of existence! If they maintain their independence, but support Labor's less "extreme" policies, they have some small hope of "carrying on." All signs thus point to Liberal support for a Labor Cabinet for some time to come—at least, until the Miners' wage issue comes up in May. Then, Liberals may balk at following Labor's nationalization program—and then again, large numbers of them may not.

So, the sun shines on Labor's future prospects. They will probably be able to put through their unemployment and foreign program immediately—and then can again face the country on the clear-cut questions of nationalization and the capital levy, with a record of achievements already accomplished and promises sincerely kept. We shall see what we shall see!

"FOOD" FOR THOUGHT

SENATOR LaFollette has brought back from Europe the same message as other progressive Senators and Congressmen. It is a tribute to Co-operation—which has stood up stronger than any institution under the strain of the Great Depression.

A sample of what is being done across the water is furnished by the **Millgate Monthly**, British co-operative organ, in a pen picture of the "Elanto"—the remarkable food distributing co-operative of Helsingfors, the capital of Finland. Its story is a fitting supplement to the account of the "Pellervo" in last month's **Labor Age**.

The word "Elanto" is seen everywhere in the Finnish capital. No wonder; for this one co-operative alone has 100 shops. The word means "food"; but the "Elanto" is more than food to the Finnish workers. It is meat, drink, tobacco, milk—"the supplier of their daily wants and needs." It is the largest distributing society, not only in Finland, but in Northern Europe.

It was as late as 1907 that "Elanto" opened its first humble shop for trading purposes. Its development is, therefore, little short of miraculous. Necessity was its mother. The unhygienic condition of the private bakeries in Finland's capital was the reason for its birth. Although its business has spread enormously since its begin-



ELANTO'S HEADQUARTERS

ning, the bakery remains the center of its activities and program.

As early as 1908, the co-operative opened its first cafe, in order to advertise its bakery goods. During the world war, to fight war profiteering, it established several restaurants—and today has the biggest restaurant business in the northern country. The sale of milk followed—today obtained from its own dairies—and later on, the 49 grocery shops which it now owns and operates. It has its own farmland—raising oats and hay thereon, and also pigs. It has purchased the beautiful island of Sumparn, as a summer home for its employees. There 100 children are taken from the capital every day, to enjoy themselves in the fresh air and sunshine.

Every seventh person in Helsingfors and vicinity is a member of the society. They have watched it grow and prosper—and rid them of the extortions of private business. They swear by it, and loyally support it. Wherein there is not merely "food" for them—but food for thought among our own American workers, only now coming to understand the great value of co-operative undertakings. The A. F. of L. at Portland again affirmed its faith in this movement, and recommended the spread of co-operatives to its affiliated unions. Let's go!—to build an "Elanto"—or several "Elantos" of our own.

With Our Readers

(The interest aroused by the subjects discussed in recent issues of LABOR AGE has flooded this office with letters from our readers. It is impossible to publish all of them, but from now on we will devote at least one page to the most interesting of this correspondence.)

TAKING THE RAILROADS

I HAVE received the "Labor Age" for November and have read it with great interest, especially the article with regard to the high cost of private ownership and your article with regard to the railroads. Both articles are excellent.

But the remedy for the railroads is not the Plumb Plan. The railroads should be taken over and operated by the Government for service and not for profit. The railroads are the highways of the nation, and they have been guilty under private ownership, of helping more than any one thing perhaps, in the formation of trusts and combinations to exploit the people of the United States. To turn the roads over to the Railway Train Men would simply allow them to exploit the people of the United States in the same way that they have heretofore been exploited, and they would do it without any scruple whatever, and the entire vote of the railway train men would be used to control the political parties to keep them in control indefinitely. You would thus make the railway train men exploiters of their fellow men, corrupt and demoralize them, and make them the allies of the other combinations that are exploiting everybody.

Over twenty-five years ago I introduced a bill in the Senate of the United States to take over the railroads of the United States paying the actual value of the property at that time, and provided that the railroads should be operated by the post office department in the interests of the people of this country who had already built and paid for those properties. I provided in that bill that passenger fares should be one cent a mile, and I showed in my argument that the railroads could carry passengers at one cent a mile if the abuse of free transportation to the people who could afford to pay their fare was abolished; and I provided in the law that no passes or favors of any sort could be given to anybody; that the freight rate should be reduced one-half and that no discriminations should be granted to any individual or corporation whatever.

I have published a book entitled, "Triumphant Plutocracy" and there is a chapter on the railroads in that book. I wonder when the writers on this question advocate the high cost of the private ownership of the railroads, never suggest that the roads should be taken over by the Government, their stocks and bonds cancelled without compensation! This would not be confiscation or robbery. It is simply taking from the thieves the stolen property that has been created by the people of the United States, and restoring this property to its original owners, the people who created it.

There is no kind of property in existence, not even the land, where it is so much the imperative duty of the public to take it and devote it to the general welfare, as the railroads, and perhaps the coal mines.

I am quite certain that nothing will be done until the people who do the work and produce the wealth, organize a political party composed of those who are engaged in useful occupations, with a platform declaring that man shall not exploit his fellow men, and a slogan, "All power to the people who do the work and produce the wealth," for there is no question but that the railroads and the coal mines as well, should be taken over without compensation to the present owners, and this can only be done through a political party, a class party. The exploiters of the people of the United States now in control of this government, have never produced any of the wealth and they have it all.

Yours truly,

R. F. PETTIGREW.

SEATTLE'S LABOR BANK

IN the article on labor banking, appearing in the November issue of your magazine, there is a very important omission.

The very first attempt on the part of Organized Labor to operate any financial institution was made in Seattle, when the Trades Union Savings and Loan Association, a mutual saving and loan society operating under the laws of the state of Washington, was established on March 1, 1919. Fifteen prominent members of Organized Labor make up the board of directors, and the stockholders are the depositors. All the profits of the institution are divided pro rata among the depositors in proportion to their deposits. In addition, the association makes a practice of keeping the rate for loans to a minimum, and concentrates so far as possible on helping workers build homes.

In the first year of the new institution its deposits rapidly mounted up until they exceeded \$900,000. At the beginning of the depression period of 1921, the biggest saving bank catering to wage earners was closed, which caused a run on all banks and particularly on the labor institution. In eight months' time the Trade Union Savings and Loan Association liquidated nearly 60 per cent of its deposits, dropping back to just a little in excess of \$400,000. No other bank in the state could possibly have met the situation. As a result of our success in meeting the crisis, confidence in our ability has been firmly established and the association now has an excess of \$600,000 deposits and is growing steadily. It is only a matter of months until we are back again at our high point.

I have noted a number of articles on labor banking, and they have so generally failed to mention this most successful institution that I felt that it was time to get the facts before at least some of the people who are interested.

Fraternally,

E. B. AULT,

Editor-Manager, Seattle Union Record.

IN MEMORY OF OUR FRIEND

ARTHUR GLEASON is dead. In the prime of his manhood he died.

In a hospital in the Nation's capital, away from his home, away from his friends, he suddenly took ill and as suddenly passed away. No truer friend of the workers ever lived. No one more eager to aid quietly and unobtrusively causes that he saw were destined to do great things. No one among those loosely called "intellectuals" knew better than he the true role of the "intellectual" in connection with the Labor Movement—the humble, patient role that Frank Hodges so eloquently alluded to as played by his friend, R. H. Tawney, for our British brothers.

How beautifully did he encourage such institutions as the Educational Department of the International Ladies' Garment Workers, LABOR AGE and other endeavors of that sort. When many doubted, he never doubted. When some scoffed at the "slowness" of the workers to rush out and "save the world," he never scoffed. His was the spirit of the real artist—striving to express itself in terms that every man could understand, drawing out the humble and "uncouth" and showing that they are the truly great.

When the Workers' Education Movement has spread over this country, when it has given to America the new generation of labor men to carry on the work of the present pioneers, Arthur Gleason's name will be mentioned in golden letters as one who saw with a clear vision what was to come to pass.

BOOK NOTES

Edited by PRINCE HOPKINS

BUSINESS VENTURES OF THE WORKERS—HOW NOT TO DO IT!

LABOR of late has been venturing into new paths. (It has been and is the job of LABOR AGE to record these as they are taken up.) It has been making a large effort to organize its financial power as it has been endeavoring in the past to do with its man power. Richard Boeckel's "Labor's Money" (Harcourt Brace and Co.) gives an account of this new drive on the workers' part.

Boeckel, however, describes not only the union attempts at self-sufficiency, through the establishment of labor banks, union-owned enterprises, etc., but also the purchase of huge quantities of industrial stock in such companies as the U. S. Steel Corporation and the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Co. Such purchases may, he indicates, within a few years secure the controlling vote of the management of the concerns! He compares this method to advantage with the terrible strikes in the industries mentioned, by which the workers have thus far failed to achieve their ends. Perseverance in this method of control through investment is upheld as a sure way to transform society without revolution.

We have in this book and these conclusions an example of how men who have not been on the firing line of the labor struggle can become confused in their ideas. We also can see why the American Federation of Labor warns that labor banks are not in themselves any final solution of Labor's fight, or any substitute for militant union action. Any one acquainted practically with the U. S. Steel Corporation or with Mr. Mitten's "ideals" will not for a moment imagine that these stock-selling schemes are anything but devices to hold the workers in further subjection. And so they have proved to be.

The only sound efforts of Labor in business are those conducted by unions themselves—belligerent unions that know how to use the strike. These are the only bodies that will know how to protect the workers' rights in industry. The business and banking efforts of the unions are for the purpose of strengthening Labor in the industrial fight—not weakening it. They are for the purpose also of fitting the militant union men for the task of industrial group control. Mr. Boeckel has gone off on a side track, and confused the issue in his otherwise good effort to set down Labor's struggle for self-sufficiency and power.

LABOR WOMEN

THE Workers Bookshelf has now published "Women and the Labor Movement," by Alice Henry. (Geo. H. Doran Co., 1923.) The type is rather small—too small, it seems, even though there is reason for it in the resulting compact proportions of the book.

"The trade union," Miss Henry rightly says, "is a school wherein no one lives unto herself. The members learn to consider every question from the point of view of the general good; they have often to compromise, to balance the lesser advantages against the greater. They have to make important decisions and abide by the results." She traces the coming of this beneficial influence, and its effect, up to the present status of international organization of women workers.

The improvement which has shown itself since the war especially is one "that does not so much show itself in the moving of women from one occupation to another as within the factory or plant itself, where it results in taking the woman away from the mechanical monotonous task of lifting the material used or drilling or feeding the machine to the actual handling of a delicate and complicated machine itself; the milling of the parts, the setting of the machine, the testing of the temper of tools."

An interesting chapter is that on the Negro Woman. "Instances—go a long way in refuting the familiar charges of general inefficiency set down against the negro girl. As regards her permanent industrial status, the colored woman can rise only in the degree the race rises. Unless justice be done to the colored man and woman alike, they will both help to drag down the standards of the white workers to the level of their own, and may live to be registered as strike breakers."

Apropos of international meetings of the women's representatives, those who come try in vain at first, Miss Henry says, to look at matters in a truly international way. This only comes after repeatedly meeting, and getting the points of view of other countries. Needless to say, we think this book should be in every trade union library—where it should prove a stimulus to further organization of women workers. That is the only dark spot in the record there—that there are not more enrolled within the ranks of Organized Labor, a fact partly due, of course, to their transitory character as workers.

CAN LABOR GOVERN?

AT this time, when England is on the verge of a Labor Government, it is most important to study the experience of Labor in governing elsewhere. The organization of Labor as a party in Australia in this regard is given by V. C. Childe in "How Labour Governs." (Labour Publishing Co., London, 1923.)

This book shows how labor politicians lost their original socialistic purpose in catering to the liquor interests, the small-farmer vote, and the Catholic vote. Finally the proletariat became disgusted with the game, and tried extra-political methods. The heyday of the I. W. W., the origin of the One Big Union movement, miscellaneous other labor organizations and their equal failure to achieve the workers' goal, are then examined.

The book is too frank and impartial to serve the interests of any narrow propaganda. Its real instructive value is, therefore, very great.

Another timely book is "The Man of Tomorrow; J. Ramsay MacDonald." Many of the same comments can be made on this book, however, as on Dr. Dillon's biography of Obregon, recently reviewed on this page. It is this: Here is a book about a very fine man, and consequently the biographer has so lost himself in admiration as to leave a suggestion of the sickly-sweet, rather than of a real personality.

But even if 300 pages (nearly) of continuous tributes are rather too many, they testify to a character who is well worth reading about.

MacDonald is in interesting contrast to Obregon on many points. His affiliation with labor has been from the beginning—he saw his political principles clearly from the start. He lacks Obregon's social ease—is more reserved, less easy to make friends with. He's a pacifist—he knows that whatever is won by the sword soon crumbles to ashes.

IN EXPLANATION

The series of summaries of labor novels, announced sometime ago, has not been begun, because of the special articles of current interest which have crowded these out. We refer particularly to the "Expose of a Labor Spy" and "The Elk Hills Steal." The summaries will be run shortly in the form of novelettes.

THREE VITAL ISSUES:

IMMIGRATION

(The Present Immigration Quota Law Expires Shortly — What Shall Be Done About It?)

SUPER-POWER

(Report on the National Super-Power Conference—Washington, Jan. 16-17)

FARMER-LABOR PROGRESS

(Things are happening thick and fast toward solidifying the Farmer-Labor Alliance—More news about what this means in the next campaign)

Appearing in the February Issue of LABOR AGE

This series of informative articles continues the work of securing original and first-hand data on what American Labor is doing—presenting such in a simple and attractive way, so that he who runs may read.

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